



# Reddam House Berkshire

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

*Reddam House Berkshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, students and visitors to share this commitment. [This is a whole school policy.](#)*

*All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Reddam House Berkshire.*

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## Introduction

This policy applies to all students at Reddam House, including those in EYFS and covers the RSE taught at Reddam House.

RSE is taught as part of the Aspire to Be (A2B) Programme in Middle and Senior School or Life Skills (Jigsaw Programme) in the Junior School, which develops essential skills and attributes such as self-esteem, managing risk and resisting peer pressure which students can apply to a range of ideas; and which addresses related factors such as alcohol and drugs, media literacy, and equality and prejudice. The school is fully aware of the types of pressures that may affect children at all stages in their lives and committed to providing a round education about keeping safe and maintaining healthy relationships and attitudes. The school's Child Protection/Safeguarding policy (September 2023) sets the scene regarding types of harm, thereby establishing a curriculum pertinent to the needs of children at different ages within the school.

To be effective RSE should always be taught within a broader PSHE education programme. RSE enhances and is enhanced by learning around topics such as mental health and the development of skills and attributes such as risk management, resilience and decision making. (Reference PSHE Association).

This policy has been written following the guidance on good practice and has links with the Equal Opportunities, Counter-Bullying and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.

## Aims of Relationships and Sex Education at Reddam House

RSE is learning about emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.

All these subjects should be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting students to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. For example, the curriculum on relationships and sex are complemented, and supported by, the school's wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, bullying and safeguarding.

The aim of the programme is:

- to instil in our students a respect for human life and the dignity of the human person giving them clear, accurate, appropriate, and up-to-date information on sexual issues
- helping students to acquire skills which will enable them to make informed choices and decisions in their lives, looking clearly at their responsibilities, first to themselves and then towards others

- providing a climate that allows individuals to feel valued and affirmed, and therefore, safe, and unthreatened, enabling them to put forward and explore their ideas, feelings, and emotions
- providing the opportunity for students to explore and clarify attitudes and values in their developing experience of relationships and sexuality
- raising awareness of all that undermines the dignity of self and others
- guiding students towards spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical well-being
- encouraging a respect for those who represent the diversity of human experience, culture, and sexuality
- equipping students to know how, and when to ask for help, to have the confidence to speak up and access the necessary support

The programme will ensure that we comply with legal requirements such as the vital part RSE plays in meeting best practice for Safeguarding.

The governors and the school follow national guidelines which expect that all students will receive sex education which is part of the science curriculum and examination specifications, but that parents may withdraw students from relationship and sex education delivered as part of the *Aspire to Be* or *Life Skills Programme*. For parents who wish to withdraw their child from RSE lessons, a letter should be sent to the Head of School who will acknowledge this and explain what alternative arrangements will be put in place.

From 2020, Relationships Education has been compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) has been compulsory in all secondary schools. This accords with statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State – *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023*.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools. This is in response to the identified risks children and young people may face through their increased online activities, and the need to support them to be safe and healthy, so they are able to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Following consultation with parents, young people and professionals the DfE has published statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education in England (DfE, 2020).

Reddam House will integrate elements from the DfE guidance, Sexual violence, and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2021).

## Safeguarding

At the heart of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, there is a focus on keeping children safe and the role that schools can play by preventative education.

Teachers are made aware of the risks in teaching about sensitive subjects such as self-harm and suicide and consider planning around these issues and ensuring material is focused on prevention rather than being instructional.

Any issues identified will be reported to the DSL in line with the school's child protection/safeguarding policy. On a wider level, these issues are also covered through the implementation of the school's PSHE policy.

Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. This in turn can lead to an increase in children disclosing abuse, or of teachers becoming aware of concerns about a child's wellbeing.

Teachers should all understand how to respond to disclosures of abuse and report any concerns they may have, following the school's safeguarding procedures. The school will also pay close attention to the mental and emotional health needs of all children in the school and to consider these issues as part of the PSHE curriculum.

## Rationale

### Beliefs, attitudes, and values

Our Relationships and Sex Education programme will be developmental, giving accurate and appropriate information which is inclusive and accessible to all our young people. It must be taught within a framework of moral principles.

To carry out these principles in practice it is important that every child is helped to realise the importance of respecting themselves and others in their relationships both at school and outside, and the responsibility that they have both to themselves and to others in the choices and decisions that they make.

Values can be taught and can be learnt by experience and example, but they cannot be imposed. Students will be given the opportunity to discuss values and morality. This will encourage the growth of self-awareness and will enable them to develop morally and establish their own values framework.

Teachers should be aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying, and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Teachers should ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law

Discussion of moral values will not take place in the abstract but will relate to young people's experience and expectations of relationships, sexuality, and wider moral issues which will affect their lives. Students will be encouraged to consider values which demonstrate compassion and care when interacting with people whose ideas do not conform with their own.

It is important that they realise that strong emotions are experienced in sexual intimacy, and that they are aware of their responsibility in showing respect and care for their own and the other person's feelings, decisions, rights, and bodies.

It is appropriate to teach students about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues, this is fully integrated into our programmes of study rather than delivered as a standalone unit:

*“Students should be able to understand the world in which they are growing up, which means understanding that some people are LGBT, that this should be respected in British society, and that the law affords them and their relationships recognition and protections” (DfE, 2021).*

## Knowledge and Information

Research has shown that effective sex education, both in school and at home, can lead to more responsible behaviour and a reduced likelihood of early sexual activity and risk of psychological and physical harm.

At the start of any topic or session it is important that teachers sensitively examine the knowledge that the students already have, which will give them a realistic starting point. This will be done using an online form which assesses all students' level of prior knowledge and confidence in relation to relationships and sex education.

Liaison with parents and other parts of the school is particularly important in helping establish a programme that meets real needs.

The information and knowledge content of the programme will include the following:

- Full, accurate and up-to-date information about growth and development on topics including puberty, sexual relationships, consent, conception, fertility control, childcare and responsible parenthood, including the legal aspects of sexuality; exploring gender identity to include transgender and transitioning, positive and negative consequences of sexual practice; HIV/AIDS; unplanned pregnancy; STIs and cervical cancer.

- Information about the essential elements involved in establishing and maintaining close relationships which are central to personal happiness.
- Looking at what friendship and love involve in real terms will be an important part of sex education.
- Information which aims to educate against prejudice.

## Skills

Social skills in learning about relationships cannot just be taught, they evolve based on individual and shared experiences. Success in acquiring these skills depends on young people feeling valued themselves. Our first task is to try to increase their self-esteem, confidence and integrity.

In sex education, opportunities will be provided for students to assess evidence, make individual and group decisions, learn to listen and negotiate, and to look at ways of dealing with conflict and solving problems.

Independent and group work will enable students to explore other people's points of view, considering diversity, fairness, justice, prejudice and discrimination.

Developing their questioning skills and critical ability, it is hoped, will help them to make informed and balanced choices, and become more self-aware.

## Organisation and Delivery of the Programme

The overall planning and preparation of materials for the programme is done by the Heads of School supported by, and in consultation with, the Life Skills Coordinator (Junior School only) the teachers of A2B / Life Skills and Year Coordinators.

Regular opportunities for input are also afforded to the wider academic staff at INSET where Year Coordinators meet with their tutees. The NSPCC Talk Relationships modules are used to facilitate discussion.

Wider aspects regarding sexuality and relationships are integrated into all pastoral and curricular areas embracing a whole school approach.

## Involvement of parents

This policy is published on the school's website and available on request from reception.

### **Right to withdraw**

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 RSE is now statutory in all schools, including independent schools. It is noted that parents have the statutory right to withdraw their child

from lessons concerning sex and relationships education as delivered through the Aspire to Be Programme/Life Skills Programme. They do not have a statutory right to remove their child from sex education within the science curriculum, except under exceptional circumstances, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. At which time a child can elect to participate.

*The DfE has produced guides for parents of primary and secondary aged children which can be used by schools to communicate how relationships and health education will be taught. The guides provide details of topics that will be covered and information of parent's rights to withdraw.*

The schools will continue to work closely with parents when planning and delivering RSE.

Parents of students in the Junior School will be contacted by letter when relationships and sex education is about to take place. It is taught in a distinct unit during the summer term, and key school staff are available for discussion should parents have any questions about the teaching of sensitive matters. Parents will have the opportunity to consult with staff on the content and teaching of RSE ahead of the units being taught.

Parents of the Middle and Senior Schools will be contacted by letter/email early in the school year. This letter will inform the parents of the school's plans for their child, share this policy, inform them of the legal obligations of the school and opting out, and ask them for their views on the above.

Heads of School will lead this communication, supported by Year Coordinators, and those teams will review and adapt the RSE programme in response to parental feedback.

## Sensitive Issues

### The Legal Position

A teacher's pastoral concerns should never trespass on parental rights and responsibilities. Generally, according to circular 5/94, teachers should not give contraceptive advice to an individual student under the age of 16. A student requesting advice on any aspect of sexual behaviour should be encouraged to discuss the matter with his or her parents and (if appropriate) a relevant health profession, possibly the school nurse.

### School Practice

Teachers should not give students advice on contraception pertaining to their individual personal situation but should encourage them to speak to their parents. If students say they are unable to seek help from their parents, the member of staff concerned should, after a careful discussion with the student, on the moral, physical and legal implications, inform the child about



how to seek help from appropriate health professionals. Students should have the right to information about who these professional people are and where they can be found in their local areas.

Teachers can discuss with individual students the issues that surround the use of contraception. If the teacher is uncertain about any of the issues involved, they can seek advice or support from another member of staff within the school, or a health professional outside

It is important to respect the student's confidentiality by presenting a hypothetical situation which will exclude their identity. If the teacher feels that in talking to an individual around matters of contraception there is a risk that they might be put in a position which could be compromising, it is advisable for them to be accompanied by another member of staff, having agreed with the student who this should be.

### Answering students' questions

If teachers do not feel comfortable with questions that arise out of issues pertaining to relationships and sex education, then they should seek advice from either their Year Coordinator, Head of Department, or from the Head of School as they see appropriate.

They should not feel obliged to answer difficult questions immediately, and to do so could be inappropriate in a class forum. Whisper is an anonymous reporting tool used when teaching sensitive issues. Questions are answered by one of the DSL team.

### Procedures concerning Confidentiality and Disclosure

It is important that students understand the position regarding confidentiality between themselves and staff before speaking to them in confidence.

Teachers must not make promises of confidentiality to a student that cannot be kept.

However, it is important that young people feel confident that they can approach teachers for information and support on issues that may relate to their sexual behaviour. It is vital that teachers can respond to young people's requests for help and do not turn them away.

It is unlikely that young people will trust teachers if they feel that this information will be passed on to their parents. Legal opinion suggests that teachers should only inform parents of the sexual activity of students, if, in their professional opinion, it is in the best interest of the child to do so. (Sex Education Forum: response to DFE guidelines).

Where the circumstances are such as to lead a teacher to believe that a student has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place him or her at physical risk

or in breach of the law, the teacher has a general responsibility to ensure that the student is aware of the implications and is urged to seek advice. In such circumstances, the teacher should inform the Head of School.

The Head of School should arrange for the student to be counselled if appropriate. Where the student is underage, the parents need to be made aware, preferably by the student him/herself (and in that case checking that it has been done).

If there is any disclosure which indicates that a student is at risk of or has experienced abuse it is essential that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed immediately. Please refer to the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (September 2023)*.

It is important that outside speakers are aware of these procedures. See *Visiting Speakers Policy*.

## Relationships and Sex Education in each School

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information needed to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but teaches young people to understand human sexuality and respect themselves and others.

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure young people can make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress to adult life. This will always be delivered at an age-appropriate level or time.

Students should also be given opportunities to understand how healthy relationships can benefit their own mental wellbeing and self-respect.

There are opportunities for students to learn about the laws surrounding sex, sexuality, sexual health, and gender identity which should be delivered in an age appropriate and inclusive way.

The laws around a variety of other issues should be considered which include: marriage, consent, pornography, abortion, radicalisation and gangs.

There should also be opportunities to learn about grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse which should include addressing coercive and controlling behaviour.

## Relationships and Sex Education in the Senior School

### *Aims of the Aspire to Be Programme in Seniors:*

- To ensure that students understand what consent is, the legal and ethical details, the meaning of choice, freedom and capacity to consent and strategies to manage giving and withdrawing consent.
- To ensure students are given clear and accurate information to enable them to take responsibility for their own sexual behaviour and health, including information about HIV/AIDS and other STIs, and abortion.
- To explore the powerful feelings connected with sexuality and sexual behaviour.
- To encourage students to value themselves and their sexuality. To develop a deeper understanding of the importance of close and loving relationships, now and in their future lives beyond school. To be aware of the dignity of all people and their responsibility to themselves and others.
- To encourage responsibility in relationships, reflecting upon the effect that their behaviour has on other people, and to clarify their own sexual values.
- To encourage debate and discussion on social and moral issues concerning sexuality in order to develop students' critical awareness, and their ability to make reasoned judgements establishing their own values.
- To encourage students to see the importance of basing the expression of their sexuality on essential human values rather than stereotypes which promote their sexuality at the expense of other people's.
- To consider what loving means to them in the light of their own needs and experience.
- To give students the opportunity to practise assertiveness, to equip them for difficult situations in their future lives.

### *Sixth Form*

In the Sixth Form we adopt a flexible approach to Relationships and Sex Education, providing students with the most up-to-date information about issues which are relevant to them as adults. Year 12 and Year 13 groups are often combined, and sessions are conducted either in individual tutor groups or with the entire Sixth Form when speakers are invited.

### *Key Stage Four*

In Key Stage 4, students who study GCSE biology as part of the separate science or combined science programme will cover biological aspects of RSE.

Students in Years 10-11 follow the Jigsaw programme of study for PSHEE and Citizenship, which is closely aligned to the statutory DfE guidance (2021).

There are four 'Puzzles' in Jigsaw that are designed to progress in sequence from September to July:

1. Being Me in My World
2. Dreams and Goals
3. Healthy Me
4. Relationships

Each Puzzle has a Big Question, encouraging a philosophical approach as well as providing a focus to be reflected upon as the Puzzle progresses, another way to assess learning progress and become aware of how opinions may be changing with added learning.

All the statutory requirements for RSHE are met across the ages 11-16 programme, and Jigsaw PSHE is aligned with the NCFE (Northern Council for Further Education) RSHE Awards, allowing students to gain external accreditation for their work in this subject without creating extra planning for teachers.

## Relationships and Sex Education in the Middle School

*Aims of the Aspire to Be Programme in Middle School:*

- To enable students to understand what consent means, why it is important, and strategies to manage persuasion and pressure on consent.
- To encourage students to understand and value their sexuality.
- To prepare students for and to clarify pubertal changes: physical, practical, emotional and social.
- To help students to celebrate the growth and development of their bodies and emotions and encourage a positive self-image.
- To study the process of human reproduction, conception, and contraception.
- To ensure they are given clear, accurate information to enable them to take responsibility for their own sexual behaviour and health (including in Year 9, information about HIV/AIDS and other STIs).
- To enable students to communicate about sexual matters in a clear and unembarrassed way, using appropriate language.
- To help students to understand their responsibility for themselves and towards others as they grow up, and to make clear the importance of developing their own values and their ability to make moral choices, including the importance of valuing and protecting themselves.
- To raise students' awareness and understanding of themselves, their sexuality and that of others.
- To help children see beyond the immediate situation, to the consequences that result from their behaviour, practising coping and decision-making skills in role-play.

- To allow students to make good choices online and to understand the legalities around youth produced sexual imagery, including distribution and coercion.

In Year 7 Science, students are taught about reproduction in animals in the context of human reproduction. The structure of human reproductive systems, fertilisation and pregnancy are covered.

Students in Year 7-9 follow the Jigsaw programme of study for PSHE and Citizenship, which is closely aligned to the latest statutory DfE guidance (2020).

There are six 'Puzzles' in Jigsaw that are designed to build on the Jigsaw 3-11 Programme, offering a holistic PSHE learning journey, with a progressive, spiral curriculum that addresses real needs in a rapidly changing world:

1. Being Me in My World
2. Celebrating Difference
3. Dreams and Goals
4. Healthy Me
5. Relationships
6. Changing Me

The 'Relationship and Sex Education' components are taught in the context of relationships, communication, social skills and values, always relative to the age and maturity of students. A mapping document which details the areas of the RSE curriculum covered in each 'puzzle' can be found here - [RSHE Overview 11-16.pdf](#)

The Jigsaw Sex Education Pieces (lessons) aim to give students their entitlement to information as appropriate to their age and stage of development, about

- puberty
- human reproduction
- sexual health
- consent

It is treated in a matter-of-fact manner to allay embarrassment and fear and includes sources of support and advice.

## Relationships Education in the Junior School

The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults.

This will create opportunities to ensure children are taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing and how friendships can impact on this.

Children will also be taught to recognise and report different types of abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual. This will include focusing on boundaries and privacy so that children understand that they have rights over their own bodies and know how to seek advice when they suspect or know something is wrong.

There will also be opportunities to teach children about boundaries with their peers, including when they are online, and ensuring they learn that where abuse takes place it is never the fault of the child who is abused.

At least biannually, the NSPCC is also invited to come into school to work with the students to further educate and support them.

Students in the Junior School follow the Jigsaw programme of study for PSHEE and Citizenship, which is closely aligned to the statutory DfE guidance (2021).

There are six 'Puzzles' in Jigsaw that are designed to progress in sequence from September to July:

1. Autumn 1 Being Me in My World
2. Autumn 2 Celebrating Difference (including anti-bullying)
3. Spring 1 Dreams and Goals
4. Spring 2 Healthy Me
5. Summer 1 Relationships
6. Summer 2 Changing Me (including Sex Education)

The 'relationship and sex education' components are taught in the context of relationships, communication, social skills, and values, always relative to the age and maturity of students.

The Jigsaw Sex Education Pieces in the 'Changing Me' puzzle, aim to give children their entitlement to information, as appropriate to their age and stage of development, about

- puberty
- human reproduction

It is treated in a matter-of-fact manner to allay embarrassment and fear

Prior to the 'Changing Me' puzzle taking place, the Head of School and Life Skills Coordinator will liaise with all staff teaching the unit to reiterate key points and ensure all teachers understand the unit and their role.

Teachers are advised not to answer questions without careful thought and as such each Changing Me lesson will have an anonymous question box and students are encouraged to write down their questions first.

Parents will be contacted and consulted with, ahead of the 'Changing Me' unit taking place.

## Relationships Education in the Early Learning School

Our aim with our youngest children is to develop children's sense of themselves and the changes they have experienced since birth. Through our core philosophy we begin to build an understanding of the importance of friendships, how to behave with one another and the importance of family relationships.

We demonstrate:

- ✓ Gentle hands
- ✓ Kind hearts
- ✓ Walking feet
- ✓ Listening Ears
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Inside voices
- ✓ Good manners



## Complaints

We hope that you will not feel the need to complain about the operation of our relationships and Sex Education Policy and that any difficulty can be sensitively and efficiently handled before it reaches that stage. However, the school's Complaints Procedures, which apply equally to the Early Learning School are on our website, and we will send you copies on request.

## Staff support and Training

All teaching staff perform a pastoral role in the school, therefore even if they do not teach RSE they still receive training through the NSPCC Learning's 'Talk Relationships' programme.

This takes place on a rolling programme during our regular INSET days. There are six training modules, which include training on: establishing and maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment, encouraging and promoting healthy discussion/debate in the classroom, giving teachers clarity around safeguarding and school/statutory guidance, and ensuring that we are being non-judgemental, non-bias and objective in our RSE teaching.

The DFE has useful support and training materials for teachers on relationships, sex and health education <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health> which is shared with all teachers of RSE. We also arrange bi-annual RSE teacher training with an external provider.

Support is also provided to staff through the resourcing of the RSE programme.

At KS3 and KS4 our Jigsaw programme provides detailed guidance on all lessons, and at KS5 ....

Audit of content  
LGBTQ statement  
Accessibility statement  
Parents and staff websites and resources  
COVID-19 contingency  
Assessment, monitoring and Evaluation