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FIDES et OPERA

BROMLEY
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Definition of RSE – from *Sex Education Forum*

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Bromley High School takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible Relationships and Sex education (RSE) to all its pupils as part of the school's Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education curriculum (PSHE) very seriously. At our school we want parents and pupils to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both age and development of pupils.

This teaching is not intended to replace advice or guidance which is ideally received at home, but to supplement and broaden knowledge and understanding.

This policy is drafted by the Head of Pupil Personal Development in consultation with the Head, Deputy Head Pastoral, the school nurse and SEND coordinator. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this policy content (see Partnership with Parents below).

Aims of policy:

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. This includes emphasis on good health, the value of self-esteem in making choices and judgements, the nature of healthy and consensual relationships, and knowledge about how the body works, all within a context of moral issues and values.

We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle and to care for and respect their bodies, and we provide them with the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

Provision:

We follow the Department of Education guidance mandatory in England from July 2020: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance*.

Taught PSHE has also been part of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations since 2014. We aim to provide a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum that not just fulfils, but exceeds externally set standards.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

Positive Mental Health Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

The school also has regard to other relevant legislation and statutory guidance such as the Equality Act 2010 and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Provision:

The Bromley High School curriculum is age appropriate and spiral, allowing pupils to re-visit topics and build knowledge and life skills over time. We support equal opportunities in education, seeing it as enabling and encouraging all our students to build self-esteem through discussion and activities in a safe environment. We are equipping them with decision-making skills irrespective of gender roles and stereotyping.

Although the topics below are listed specifically, at Bromley High School we have chosen to deliver RSE mainly as part of a timetabled PSHE programme, with some elements covered by the Biology curriculum, Computer Science and supplemented with various extra-curricular talks, safeguarding sessions, professional visitors e.g. nurses and activities.

It has 3 main elements:

Attitudes and Values

Learning the importance of values

Learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable, loving relationships for the nurture of children

Learning the value of respect, love and care

Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas

Developing critical thinking as a part of decision-making.

Personal and Social Skills

Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively

Developing self-respect and empathy for others

Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice

Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made

Managing conflict

Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Promote skills in reviewing the impact and influence of the media and pornography.

Develop the skills to stay safe in an increasingly sexualised society.

Develop skills to raise self-esteem and assertiveness in order to resist pressure to maintain a healthy approach towards sexual relationships.

Understanding of sexual ethics and sexual norms.

Build on internet safety awareness, including AI, and skills to stay safe online in using mobile technology.

Knowledge and Understanding

Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages

Learning to use appropriate language to describe body parts and functions

Understanding human sexuality, reproductive health, sexual health, emotions and relationships

Learning about contraception and STIs, and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services

Learning that there are choices in relation to pregnancy.

Learning the reasons for and the benefits of delaying sexual activity

Understanding of the law as it relates to all aspects of RSE inclusive of, but not exclusively: marriage (including forced marriage), consent, CSE, pornography, FGM and equality.

Change within relationships and family

Where to seek help when a relationship is considered unsafe and there is risk of harm.

The main topics covered in RSE are:

Establishing healthy relationships

Puberty, menstrual and gynaecological health such as fertility, PCOS, Endometriosis

Consent and how to communicate this to others

Contraception

Sexually transmitted infections

Understanding our bodies

Sexting

Safer sex

Sexual exploitation, including sextortion and the challenges of AI

Sex and pornography

Personal choices

Personal safety

As part of the PSHE programme, Relationships and Sex Education in the Senior School is taught by specialist teaching staff and the school nurse in year groups, using a range of activities with materials and support provided by health professionals.

In the Junior School, the class teacher is responsible for the delivery of the RSE programme. Delivery is mostly through discrete PSHE sessions with some aspects of RSE taught through links made in other areas such as Science. The school nurse teaches puberty and sex education lessons in Year 5 and Year 6.

Meeting the Needs of the whole school community

The programme is developed and reviewed in consultation with pupils and parents to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community. We ensure that RSE is age relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs. This policy is made available to all parents and it is published on the school website.

Staff training:

We ensure that staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues related to RSE including: confidentiality, setting ground rules and establishing positive behaviour, handling controversial issues and responding to questions. We ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes and are familiar with the school policy and guidance relating to relationships and sex education.

We ensure their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.

Sensitive topics

Pupils are taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang and everyday terms used in social situations will be covered as part of the discussion about what is and what isn't acceptable language to be used.

Ground rules are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and staff use strategies to enable pupils to feel comfortable to ask questions. If controversial questions are asked, the teacher will use

professional judgement about how to answer them and pupils will be allowed to raise anonymous questions if preferred.

We recognise that because of the nature of the subject, sensitive and controversial issues are likely to arise. These may include, for example, miscarriage, abortion, emerging gender identity, sexuality and sexual abuse. These are dealt with within the framework of the aims of the school and of the Relationships and Sex Education policy as a whole. Any cause for concern will be dealt with in accordance with our pastoral systems and safeguarding arrangements.

Guest speakers and outside agencies:

We sometimes use outside speakers to complement our teaching of this content, who are asked to work within the framework of the school's Relationship and Sex Education policy and adhere to the policy for Visiting Speakers. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons.

Students with special educational needs and disabilities

The school will refer to the SEND code of practice, where appropriate, and will also be aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. RSE can be particularly important for those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.

Faith perspectives

The religious background of pupils will be taken into account in the teaching so that topics are appropriately handled and to ensure that provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst protected characteristics, are met.

Resources

Materials used are in accordance with our PSHE policy and the law. Resources are available upon request.

Assessment

The Head of Pupil Personal development monitors understanding of content through scrutiny of PSHE files and informal discussion with pupils. The school has the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in PSHE/RSE as for other curriculum areas: regular feedback is provided on pupil progress, being captured through, for example written assignments, tests, or self-evaluation. The school tracks PSHE and RSE provision across each year group to ensure full coverage of statutory topics. Gaps are therefore identifiable and can be closed through additional sessions, assemblies and guest speakers.

Withdrawal from RSE

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents to review this policy. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports the whole development of the child. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education. Any parents considering withdrawing their child should contact the Head / Pastoral Deputy Head to discuss their concerns. According to *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance* paragraph 19, pupils themselves can opt into sex education from three terms before their 16th birthday.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary or secondary as we believe, in accordance with DfE guidelines the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

KS1 and 2

By the end of the primary stage pupils will focus on different types of relationship, understanding how to build healthy positive relationships, how friendships and relationships may affect health and wellbeing including mental health, understanding our similarities and differences, that we are all forming respectful relationships and understanding the importance of safety within relationships including online safety.

Years 7 to 9

By the end of secondary school pupils will continue to develop their knowledge on primary topics and in addition cover the following content, understanding different types of committed stable relationships, the characteristics associated with positive healthy friendships and respectful relationships and their effect on well-being, intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health, the concept of laws relating to consent and being safe including online, the challenges of AI and when using media. Positive physical and mental well-being.

In KS4, we build upon topics covered in KS3 and include the roles and responsibilities of successful parenting, pregnancy and miscarriage, choices surrounding parenthood, adoption and abortion, domestic abuse, FGM, CSE and county lines. Gynaecological health. Online safety teaching is extended to consider online relationships and the media – the impact of viewing harmful content/sharing images online, particularly personal material, digital footprint, pornography, sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, how information and data are generated, collected, shared and used online. Physical health and fitness

Year 12 and Year 13:

Sex education in the Sixth Form is delivered during Future Focus sessions by external speakers. Topics develop the themes previously covered (eg: LGBTQ+, consent, HIV and relationships).

Throughout the school, pupils learn how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively and how important positive interactions and connections with others are for good mental health. Physical exercise, fresh air and team games are encouraged through PE and co-curricular activities and charitable/voluntary action are actively nurtured.

Additional safeguarding talks with DSL

Monitoring, evaluation and review:

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and other changes. For this reason, we monitor, evaluate and regularly review our RSE curriculum.

A pupil working group meets termly to ensure contents and resources remain relevant to each year group and that these remain dynamic according to needs as they arise. A parent working group was established and meets termly to evaluate appropriateness of content and resources. Both groups review the policy and schemes of work with the Head of pupil personal development on an annual basis.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Policy last updated: September 2025

Next review date: September 2026