



The Henslow School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at The Henslow School are to:

- To Present information in a sensitive and balanced way and offer opportunity for discussion in a safe environment
- Provide relationships and sex education appropriate to our learners’ physical, developmental, emotional and social development
- Promote and develop self esteem
- Encourage the development of appropriate behaviour in different environments and in the community
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Teach and support our learners how to make informed choices and decisions
- To be very sensitive about the possible past experiences of our children and to deliver in a way that acknowledges their possible past traumas

2. Statutory requirements

As an independent special school we are required to deliver PSHE as set out in the Independent School Standards. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all students receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex

Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in this guidance, in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. The school must also have regard to the Equality Act 2010 when delivering content.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and proprietors. Students have opportunities to provide feedback about the RSE they have received and we use this to adjust our future delivery.

4. Definitions

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students in an age and developmentally appropriate way, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. It is particularly important at The Henslow School where many of our students have experienced negative and harmful relationships and sexual activity.

The Henslow School does not tolerate any form of sexual harassment or sexual abuse either in school or online. We ensure children know and understand what sexual harassment is, what sexual abuse looks like, and what to do if they suffer any form of it. We directly teach this through our PSHE lessons.

The definitions used by the Department for Education (DfE) are as follows:

Child on child sexual abuse: this term includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, upskirting and non-consensual sharing of inappropriate sexual images or videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth-produced sexual imagery').

Sexual harassment: unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline, which includes the following:

- Sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names;
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This may include the following:
 - Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos
 - Sexualised online bullying
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion and threats.
- Sexual violence: the sexual offences of rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- Harmful sexual behaviour: an umbrella term for problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours that are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

5. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't need to seek answers online.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE at The Henslow School is taught within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum, and other philosophical aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Students may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained professional. The content of these sessions will be agreed and modified before each session to ensure it meets the exact needs of the particular group. Care will also be taken to group students appropriately for these sessions according to maturity, confidence in a group setting and their own life experiences which may impact within this subject. Support needs for the session will also be considered carefully, with thought given to the possible impact of known staff in allowing students to talk openly, balanced with the need for good behavioural management and follow up after sessions.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media relationships
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances; families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures. At The Henslow School we will reflect sensitively that many of our young people may have a different structure of support around them as looked after youngsters.

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

6.1 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all students' experiences
- During lessons, makes students feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

6.2 Use of resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress

7. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with students' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)

- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

Please refer to our visiting speakers policy and information.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The Proprietary board

The Proprietary board will approve the RSE policy and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from components of RSE (see section 9).

8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students

- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher. At The Henslow Secondary School Mr Howells is the lead teacher.

8.4 Learners

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

The school is committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers who are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships. Some of our learners may have experienced adverse childhood experiences and as such some elements of relationships and sex education may trigger painful/difficult memories or feelings. Education staff will always take this into account when teaching RSE components and do so in a sensitive way. For other learners at the school, parents/carers may not feel that they are not developmentally ready to cover statutory elements of sex education. Parents/carers/social workers are invited to attend consultation meetings on an individual basis to discuss their children's needs. Meetings can also be arranged where parents/carers/social workers can view teaching resources.

A parent or carer who is concerned about any element of this policy, or is unhappy about their child's participation, should discuss their feelings with the Head teacher.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the Science curriculum, including Science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

Parents/carers do have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing to the Head teacher, who will make alternative arrangements for individual learners, but it is hoped that this will not be necessary. Alternative school work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

10. Training

At The Henslow School all staff receive training in attachment theory and the ethos of this approach underpins all of our work. Those school staff responsible for the delivery of PSHE will take the responsibility for delivering RSE, accessing training as required, depending on knowledge and experience. All staff are expected to role model positive relationships.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Head Teacher Jacqui Brooks through scheme of work scrutiny and learning walks.

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Approved by:	Mandy Clarke	Date:
Last reviewed on:	August 2025	
Next review due by:	August 2026	

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

Relationships and Sex Education curriculum map for secondary age students (see our primary policy for the primary curriculum)

TOPIC	KEY STAGE	STUDENTS WILL BE TAUGHT
Positive relationships	Key Stage 3	<p>R1. about different types of relationships, including those within families, friendships, romantic or intimate relationships and the factors that can affect them</p> <p>R2. indicators of positive, healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships, including online</p> <p>R3. about the similarities, differences and diversity among people of different race, culture, ability, sex, gender identity, age and sexual orientation</p> <p>R4. the difference between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation</p> <p>R5. to recognise that sexual attraction and sexuality are diverse</p> <p>R6. that marriage is a legal, social and emotional commitment that should be entered into freely, and never forced upon someone through threat or coercion</p> <p>R7. how the media portrays relationships and the potential impact of this on people’s expectations of relationships</p> <p>R8. that the portrayal of sex in the media and social media (including pornography) can affect people’s expectations of relationships and sex</p>

<p>Positive relationships</p>	<p>Key Stage 4</p>	<p>R1. the characteristics and benefits of strong, positive relationships, including mutual support, trust, respect, and equality</p> <p>R2. the role of pleasure in intimate relationships, including orgasms</p> <p>R3. to respond appropriately to indicators of unhealthy relationships, including seeking help where necessary</p> <p>R4. the importance of stable, committed relationships, including the rights and protections provided within legally recognised marriages and civil partnerships and the legal status of other long-term relationships</p> <p>R5. the legal rights, responsibilities and protections provided by the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>R6. about diversity in romantic and sexual attraction and developing sexuality, including sources of support and reassurance and how to access them</p> <p>R7. strategies to access reliable, accurate and appropriate advice and support with relationships, and to assist others to access it when needed</p> <p>R8. to understand the potential impact of the portrayal of sex in pornography and other media, including on sexual attitudes, expectations, and behaviours</p>
<p>Relationship values</p>	<p>Key Stage 3</p>	<p>R9. to clarify and develop personal values in friendships, love and sexual relationships</p> <p>R10. the importance of trust in relationships and the behaviours that can undermine or build trust 2</p> <p>R11. to evaluate expectations about gender roles, behaviour and intimacy within romantic relationships</p> <p>R12. that everyone has the choice to delay sex, or to enjoy intimacy without sex</p>
<p>Relationship values</p>	<p>Key Stage 4</p>	<p>R9. to recognise, clarify and if necessary, challenge their own values and understand how their values influence their decisions, goals, and behaviours</p> <p>R10. to understand a variety of faith and cultural practices and beliefs concerning relationships and sexual activity; to respect the role these might play in relationship values</p>

<p>Forming and maintaining respectful relationships</p>	<p>Key Stage 3</p>	<p>R13. how to form, maintain and manage positive relationships, including online safely and responsibly</p> <p>R14. the qualities and behaviours they should expect and exhibit in a wide variety of positive relationships (including in school and wider society, family, and friendships, including online)</p> <p>R15. to further develop and rehearse the skills of team working</p> <p>R16. to further develop the skills of active listening, clear communication, negotiation, and compromise</p> <p>R17. strategies to identify and reduce risk from people online that they do not already know, when and how to access help</p> <p>R18. to manage the strong feelings that relationships can cause (including sexual attraction)</p> <p>R19. to develop conflict management skills and strategies to reconcile after disagreements</p> <p>R20. to manage the influence of drugs and alcohol on decision-making within relationships and social situations</p> <p>R21. how to manage the breakdown of a relationship (including its digital legacy), loss and change in relationships</p> <p>R22. the effects of change, including loss, separation, divorce, and bereavement; strategies for managing these and accessing support</p> <p>R23. the services available to support healthy relationships and manage unhealthy relationships, and how to access them</p>
<p>Forming and maintaining respectful relationships</p>	<p>Key Stage 4</p>	<p>R11. strategies to manage the strong emotions associated with the different stages of relationships</p> <p>R12. to manage changes safely and responsibly in personal relationships including the ending of relationships</p> <p>R13. ways to manage grief about changing relationships including the impact of separation, divorce, and bereavement; sources of support and how to access them</p> <p>R14. the opportunities and potential risks of establishing and conducting relationships online, and strategies to manage the risks</p> <p>R15. the legal and ethical responsibilities people have in relation to online aspects of relationships</p> <p>R16. to recognise unwanted attention (such as harassment and stalking including online), ways to respond and how to seek help</p> <p>R17. ways to access information and support for relationships including those experiencing difficulties</p>

Consent	Key Stage 3	<p>R24. that consent is freely given; that being pressurised, manipulated, or coerced to agree to something is not giving consent, and how to seek help in such circumstances</p> <p>R25. about the law relating to sexual consent</p> <p>R26. how to seek, give, not give, and withdraw consent (in all contexts, including online)</p> <p>R27. that the seeker of consent is legally and morally responsible for ensuring that consent has been given; that if consent is not given or is withdrawn, that decision should always be respected</p> <p>R28. to gauge readiness for sexual intimacy</p> <p>R29. the impact of sharing sexual images of others without consent</p> <p>R30. how to manage any request or pressure to share an image of themselves or others, and how to get help</p> <p>R31. that intimate relationships should be pleasurable</p>
Consent	Key Stage 4	<p>R18. about the concept of consent in maturing relationships</p> <p>R19. about the impact of attitudes towards sexual assault and to challenge victim blaming, including when abuse occurs online</p> <p>R20. to recognise the impact of drugs and alcohol on choices and sexual behaviour</p> <p>R21. the skills to assess their readiness for sex, including sexual activity online, as an individual and within a couple</p> <p>R22. to evaluate different motivations and contexts in which sexual images are shared, and possible legal, emotional and social consequences</p>
Contraception and parenthood	Key Stage 3	<p>R32. the communication and negotiation skills necessary for contraceptive use in healthy relationships (see also 'Health')</p> <p>R33. the risks related to unprotected sex</p> <p>R34. the consequences of unintended pregnancy, sources of support and the options available</p> <p>R35. the roles and responsibilities of parents, carers and children in families</p> <p>R36. the nature and importance of stable, long-term relationships (including marriage and civil partnerships) for family life and bringing up children</p>

<p>Contraception and parenthood</p>	<p>Key Stage 4</p>	<p>R23. how to choose and access appropriate contraception (including emergency contraception) and negotiate contraception use with a partner</p> <p>R24. the physical and emotional responses people may have to unintended pregnancy; the different options available; whom to talk to for accurate, impartial advice and support</p> <p>R25. the importance of parenting skills and qualities for family life, the implications of young parenthood and services that offer support for new parents and families</p> <p>R26. the reasons why people choose to adopt/foster children</p> <p>R27. about the current legal position on abortion and the range of beliefs and opinions about it.</p>
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Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of learner		Year	
Name of parent/carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	