



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

1. Introduction

Box Hill School is a school of 425 boys and girls aged between 11 and 18 years who are drawn from diverse social, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. The School aims to ensure that all Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is provided in a way that ensures pupils are protected from teaching materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and cultural background of the pupils concerned. The School's approach goes beyond the provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships. Whatever their background, all our pupils need high-quality Relationships and Sex Education so that they can make wise and informed choices. (*The Importance of Teaching' Government White Paper 2010*).

Relationships and sex education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE). A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline. (*Sex and relationships education (SRE) for the 21st century PSHEE Association and Sex Education Forum 2014*).

Relationships and Sex Education is centred around lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity. (*Department of Education Sex and Relationship Guidance July 2000*).

The Department of Education Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (July 2000) recommends that 'effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives'.

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

2. Legal Framework

This policy was developed with reference to the *Department of Education Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (July 2000)* guidance, the *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (2019, updated September 2021)* as

well as local authority and national guidelines. Relationships and sex education became compulsory (subject to a limited parental right to withdraw pupils) in all schools in England from September 2020 under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Relevant legislation relating to RSE is contained within the Education Act 1996 and The Learning and Skills Act 2000.

The sex education elements of the National Curriculum Science Order are mandatory for all pupils of primary and secondary school age. These cover anatomy, puberty, biological aspects of sexual reproduction and use of hormones to control and promote fertility. Secondary schools are required to provide an RSE programme which includes information about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS.

Other elements of personal, social and health education (PSHEE), including RSE, are non-statutory but are strongly recommended within government RSE guidance (*Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 2000*). Governors are in law expected to give 'due regard' to this guidance.

All schools are expected to provide, and make available for inspection and to parents, an up-to-date policy describing the content and organization of RSE taught outside of national curriculum science. This can be found in Box Hill School's PSHEE Policy.

Parents have a right to request that their child is excused from some or all of the sex education element. In line with the legislation (*Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Department for Education, 2019, updated September 2021*) paragraph 50 of the regulations state 'There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education'.

The *Equality Act 2010* covers the way that the curriculum is delivered. RSE issues must:

- Be taught in such a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. All pupils at Box Hill School are given equal access to RSE, including those with particular SEND needs and those who identify as part of the LGBT+ community.
- Ensure that young people are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned. Whilst Box Hill School uses a Christian approach in the delivery of both PSHEE and RSE, all the major world religions are recognised as sources of philosophical and moral wisdom. The School has a statement of aims for the teaching of all PSHEE contained within the PSHEE Policy.
- Maintain a balanced view when considering political issues.

The *DoE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 2000* indicates that:

- Young people learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up children. It should also be recognised that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage.
- Secondary school pupils should learn to understand human sexuality, learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay, and learn about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health.

- RSE should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 explains how schools and colleges play a crucial role in preventative education:

- Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment.
- These will be embedded in all aspects of school life as well as through a planned programme of evidence based RSE.

School governing bodies must have regard for the guidance.

Secondary schools should:

- Teach about relationships, love and care and the responsibilities of parenthood as well as sex.
- Focus on boys as much as girls.
- Build self-esteem.
- Teach the taking of responsibility and the consequences of one's actions in relation to sexual activity and parenthood.
- Provide young people with information about different types of contraception, safe sex and how they can access local sources of further advice and treatment.
- Use young people as peer educators e.g. teenage mothers and fathers.
- Give young people a clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure.
- Link sex and relationship education with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol.
- Ensure young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.

The following specific issues should be addressed in an RSE programme:

- Puberty
- Contraception
- Abortion
- Safer sex
- HIV/AIDS
- STIs

Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act 2004 to promote their pupils' wellbeing and under the Education Act 1996 to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. A comprehensive RSE programme can have a positive impact on pupils' health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.

In addition, the School is seeking to proactively act on the issues of discrimination highlighted by movements such as Black Lives Matter and Me Too. Furthermore, the School is keen to ensure that the pupils are educated about the Everyone's Invited movement and the issues highlighted by the Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges (June 2021).

3. Rationale and Ethos

Relationships and sex education at Box Hill School is:

- a partnership between home and School.
- actively influenced by pupils with regard to lesson planning and teaching
- relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
- taught by staff who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, pleasure, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
- designed to include the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- timetabled with sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- designed to help pupils understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation
- both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable part of life
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated to ensure that active learning methods are used
- designed to help pupils to understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media
- linked to school-based and community health services and organisations and teaches pupils about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16
- designed to promote equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs.

It contributes to:

- a positive ethos and environment for learning
- safeguarding pupils (Children Act 2004), promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships
- helping pupils keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice
- reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying.

We believe that RSE is important because it equips pupils to build healthy and happy friendships and relationships and to be safe. RSE also prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life. It is also delivered in the learning framework which aims to develop in pupils a desire to take charge of their own academic development and become self-guided learners. In this vein, PSHEE and RSE are delivered with an emphasis on investigation, reflection, and collaboration. Our School's overarching aim for our pupils is to create lifelong learners and leaders with a global mindset who will always positively impact the world around them through

the Round Square IDEALS (Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service).

We ensure that RSE is age - and circumstance - appropriate, inclusive, and meets the needs of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, and those who may be affected by 'adverse childhood experiences' such as family breakdown, bereavement and exposure to domestic violence. In addition, due consideration is given to faith backgrounds by ensuring that the delivery is given by specialised teachers who proactively tailor the approach to best suit the specific needs of the learners in a particular group.

4. Parents

We view the partnership of home and School as vital in providing the context for talking and learning about sex and relationships education. The School believes that the prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with the parents/carers. Parents are the key figures in guiding their children to cope with the emotional, physical and psychological aspects of growing up, in the forming of healthy relationships and in preparing them to cope with challenges, responsibilities and fulfilment which sexual maturity brings. Through its RSE programme the School has a role complementary and supportive to that of the parents/carers.

5. Aims of the Programme

The overall aims of Box Hill School's programme are:

- To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, RSE issues.
- To explore what pupils know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs.
- To develop positive values and a moral framework which will guide their decisions and behaviour.
- To create an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- To counteract myths.
- To explore a range of attitudes towards RSE issues and to help pupils to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle.
- To develop respect for each other as individuals, to encourage boys and girls to understand one another and for all to develop relationships based upon mutual respect.
- To recognise the value of loving and caring relationships and the place of intimacy within them.
- To increase pupil's self-esteem.
- To appreciate the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young.
- To develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others, taking responsibility for one's own actions.
- Be aware of their sexuality and understand human sexuality.
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and avoid being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.

- To contribute to a reduction in local and national teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others by understanding what these terms mean.
- To be aware of sources of help and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them.
- To be aware of the law on sexual behaviour.

The intended outcomes of our programme are that pupils will:

- Develop knowledge, skills, and attributes appropriate to their age.
- Be able to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves.
- Understand how their bodies and feelings are changing, to further develop language to talk about their health and emotions, and the appropriateness of using terms associated with physical and health difficulties.
- Develop an understanding of the steps that can be taken to protect and support their own health and wellbeing, which can have a direct impact on their ability to learn. Also, recognise the importance of self-care and the benefits of physical education/activity and time spent outdoors, as well as having sufficient sleep, good nutrition, and strategies for building resilience.
- Know the contribution that hobbies, interest, and participation in their community (including the Box Hill School community) can make to overall wellbeing, especially that with a service focus. This can contribute to a happy and successful adult life.
- Learn to recognise what makes them feel lonely. Being self-focused or isolating one's self can lead to unhappiness, and being disconnected from society.
- Consider problems and challenges, including factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious health conditions, drugs, alcohol, information and effective interventions.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The RSE programme is led by Mrs Claire Ellis, Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding). It is taught by Mrs Claire Ellis, Mr Chris Patrick, Mr Jack Freeman, Mrs Donna Walton and Ms Amelia Corbett, as well as one of the School Nurses. Visiting speakers are also used. It is supported by Tutors and Heads of Year in Tutor Times and assemblies. Overall responsibility for the RSE programme rests with the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Headmaster.

7. A Whole School Approach

RSE actively involves the whole School community. All groups who make up the School community have rights and responsibilities regarding RSE. In particular:

The School is aware that the primary role in young people's sex and relationship education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents and carers of young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will endeavour to support the provision and development of RSE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

All teaching staff are involved in the school's RSE provision. Some teach RSE through the PHSEE programme and some through Science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to pupils. Any teacher can be approached by a pupil who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues.

The School Nurses can play a key role in supporting the teacher in RSE both in terms of advice, input into lessons, provision of pastoral support for pupils and resources. The School will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the Senior Nurse.

Support staff may be involved in some RSE lessons and also play an important pastoral support role with pupils. They will have access to information about the RSE programme and be supported in their pastoral role.

Governors have responsibilities for School policies. They will be aware of the RSE provision and Policy.

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in inputting to RSE lessons and as points of referral as support services for pupils. Box Hill School will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to pupil needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within Box Hill School. Box Hill School will also promote relevant support agencies that pupils can access.

Pupils have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate RSE and to pastoral support.

8. The Role of the Pastoral Team

Box Hill School takes its role in the promotion of pupil welfare seriously. The School's pastoral network supports the RSE provided. Pupils can discuss any of the issues raised with a wide variety of people including House Parents, Heads of Year, older pupils, Tutors, Medical staff, Deputy Head Pastoral, Assistant Head Pastoral and the Independent Listener as well as appropriate external agencies.

Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for pupils in several ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through the tutorial/pastoral system. They offer a listening ear and, where appropriate, information and advice. The School Nurses offer a health and support service to pupils. Box Hill School will keep up to date about the development of local services and national help lines for young people and promote their existence to pupils and endeavour to form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to pupil needs.

9. The Parental Right of Withdrawal

In accordance with Section 241 of The Education Act 1993 and The Education Act 1996, parents have the right to withdraw their children from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. It is the hope and expectation of the School that all pupils will take part in the full programme. The School is happy to discuss parents' concerns about any part of the programme and to provide supporting material where necessary.

Where a parent exercises their right to request to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of RSE, the Headmaster will discuss the request with the parent. In addition, as appropriate, the request will be discussed with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood. The nature and purpose of the curriculum in this area will be clarified during these discussions.

Following these discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the School would respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. From that point, the child may independently opt into Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, and the School would make arrangements to provide the child with Sex Education during one of those terms. In the case of withdrawn pupils, the School is responsible for ensuring that appropriate, purposeful education is received during the period of withdrawal.

All parents are contacted annually about the right of withdrawal.

10. Curriculum Design

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHEE education provision, and includes these topics each year:

- Relationships and Sex Education
- Rights, Responsibilities and British Values
- Stay Safe; Online and Offline
- Health and Wellbeing
- Celebrating Equality and Diversity
- Life Beyond School

Our RSE programme is planned and delivered through specific themed lessons within the PSHEE curriculum. A range of teaching methods and interactive activities are included to suit the particular pupils and their year group.

The teaching of RSE is also differentiated to cater for all learning and other needs including special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to ensure that every child can access the content in a meaningful way. The School recognises that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues as a result of their SEND needs.

So as to ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, pupils are taught the importance of equality and respect. All teaching is appropriate and age appropriate in content and approach. It is important the pupils understand that sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics and hence LGBT+ content is fully integrated into RSE rather than being taught as a standalone topic.

The teaching reflects the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that the pupils clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions that they may make.

By the end of secondary school, it is expected that all pupils should know about those matters introduced in primary school, (families and people who care for us, recognising caring friendships and respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe), and also about intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health, consent, FGM, sexuality, gender identity and exploitation.

Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own learning. Assessment of learning is undertaken in a variety of ways including self-evaluation, surveys and written assignments. Regular feedback is provided on pupils' progress. The assessments are used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention.

11. Safe and Effective Practice

A safe learning environment will be ensured by promoting, from the outset, democracy and the right to free speech, tolerance of different opinions and world views.

Teachers and pupils will agree ground rules to make sure everyone feels confident to participate and voice their developing thoughts and opinions, as well as to ask questions.

Distancing techniques are used to engage the pupils' interest but also to effectively distance (depersonalise) the learning, and thus to encourage participation and a more open discussion.

Sensitive and controversial issues may arise. These issues and situations will be handled with care, respect, and an acknowledgement that there may be a variety of outlooks represented. Box Hill School's approach to RSE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints. The content will be taught in a non-judgemental and factual way.

Pupils will be able to raise questions, whether publicly or anonymously (e.g. through question boxes).

12. Safeguarding

RSE teachers are aware that effective lessons, which bring an understanding of what is, and what is not, appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection concern. As such, our teaching team is well-prepared and experienced to manage such situations with care and sensitivity, consulting with the Deputy Head Pastoral and Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ms Hayley Robinson, or in her absence, with Designated Safeguarding Deputies, the Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding), Mrs Claire Ellis, Head of Maths, Mrs Christine Wilson and House Parent and Head of Year, Jo Catton.

Visitors who support the delivery of RSE will receive a copy of this Policy in advance and will be expected to follow the Visitor Policy at all times. Visitors will be made aware that they will encounter a full range of diversity and beliefs, cultural identities, views, experience and knowledge from our pupils.

13. Engaging stakeholders

To coincide with the statutory nature of RSE, parents were informed of the Policy during year group meetings that took place during the Autumn Term 2020. These meetings included an information session and invited queries. The input of pupils was sought during PSHE lessons so as to ensure that the programme fully meets their needs. The views of teachers at the School was also sought.

We are committed to working with parents and guardians; we welcome their questions and input. All views will be listened to, but it should be noted that they do not amount to a power of veto over curriculum content. We aim to make parents fully aware of what is being taught by making

the scheme of work and the associated timings available in order that the conversation can continue at home.

Each year parents are sent the policy, information about RSE and offered to opportunity to raise questions and queries. The students are given the opportunity each year to discuss the curriculum and offer their views.

14. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

RSE teachers will continue to have departmental meetings, during which they will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE.

Pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons through quantitative and qualitative surveys, as well as through discussion with teachers and tutors.

Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities so as to ensure that the lessons address issues in a timely way that meets the needs of any local health, community or School issues.

Parents will also be consulted on a regular basis.

15. RSE Policy Review Date

This policy will next be reviewed in September 2024. It is reviewed annually or whenever Government guidance changes.

It will be reviewed by Mrs Claire Ellis, Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding), with support from Ms Hayley Robinson, Deputy Head Pastoral and the governing body. This is to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff, parents and guardians, and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance. This Policy is approved by the Headmaster.

16. Further Guidance

Copies of this Policy are available for parents, staff and Governors. It is also published on the School website.

This policy can be made available in larger print or more accessible format if required.

Review date September 2024
C Ellis Assistant Head Pastoral

Appendix One: Sample RSE Content

Year	Science	PSHEE
7	Reproduction	Relationships Safer internet use Identity, Citizenship and Nationalities Puberty and Body Development Voting, Elections and Democracy Peer pressure and staying safe offline Community, teamwork and self-care Consent, friendships and positivity
8		LGBTQ+ Law, rights and society Self esteem, body image and the future Relationships, body changes and love Gangs, drugs and alcohol Health and wellbeing
9		Critical thinking, the Media and extremism Consent, contraception and sexual health Drugs, addiction and peer pressure Decision-making and conflict management Contraception and sexual health Mental health in the modern world
10	STIs as an example of communicable disease	British Values and Human Rights Emotional wellbeing Staying safe online and offline Consumer rights and employment Minimising offline risk Politics and contemporary movements
11	Reproduction (reproductive control and responsibilities, contraception and abortion, IVF)	Careers, CV writing and the future Parenthood, pregnancy and love Sexual health Drugs, festivals and sexualisation of the media
Sixth Form	IB – reproduction and IVF	Consent & healthy relationships Sextortion Safer internet use

Assemblies are used to reinforce RSE topics for example, safer internet use, community values and the IDEALS. Other subjects within the curriculum do also teach topics for which there is crossover with RSE. For example, in Year 7 and Year 11 Geography, when Urbanisation is taught, the pupils look at the spread of disease, including STIs.