



## TALBOT HEATH SCHOOL “Honour Before Honours”

### RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

**Date adopted:** 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Date for next adoption:** Autumn Term 2026

**Reviewed by:** FGB Committee

***As a school, we will make reasonable adjustments to this policy, in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equality Act (2010), for students with SEND.***

#### **Whole School**

The original policy was developed in response to the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfES 2000) and the aims of Talbot Heath School. The current policy has been updated in line with the statutory guidance from the DfE issued under section 80A of the Education Act (2002) and Section 403 of the Education Act (1996) as well as the Talbot Heath Values.

The RSE, in line with the PSHE programme, makes a significant contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, their behaviour and Talbot Heath’s statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote pupils’ wellbeing. RSE is not compulsory in independent schools, however, independent schools are required to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. If independent schools do teach RSE, they must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. Sex and relationship education is taught through our PSHE, Science and IT programmes.

The purpose of the curriculum is to provide the building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts (irrespective of both any SEND requirements or the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010) including online relationships. Building on that knowledge, at an age and understanding appropriate stage, pupils will also develop further their understanding of health, focusing on key risk areas such as drugs and alcohol as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex by the time they leave the Junior School.

#### **DEFINITION**

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. At primary level, RSE is concerned with establishing “the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary level, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils’ understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.” (*Department of Education document 2019*)

Talbot Heath believes that RSE should be part of a broader PSHE programme through which pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives now and in the future. As part of a whole school approach and under Government guidelines, it delivers the qualities and attributes pupils need to thrive as individuals, family members, members of society and global citizens of the world.

From September 2020, we were required, by the Department of Education, to deliver relationships education.

#### **POLICY FORMATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESS**

This policy was written in conjunction with the ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education’ *Department of Education document 2019*.

Other documents that informed this RSE policy include:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2024)
- The Education Act 2002 -Section 78
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Human Rights Act 1998
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
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Guidance was taken from the PSHE Association.

Parents, carers and staff will be consulted with when making any changes to this RSE policy.

The Governing body will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The governing body has delegated the approval of this policy to the Education and Staffing Committee.

### **JUNIOR SCHOOL**

The Head of Junior liaises with other relevant Heads of Department with regard to curriculum content and coverage, e.g. sex education in science.

### **AIMS**

The aims of relationship and sex education (RSE) at Talbot Heath are to:

- Ensure our pupils have the information they need to help them to develop healthy and nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
- Enable our pupils to understand the signs of a healthy relationship and what makes a good friend, colleague and a successful marriage or civil partnership.
- Understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing
- Identify when relationships are not right and understand how situations can be managed.
- Prepare our pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.

### **KEY STAGES 1 & 2**

**Aims:** The intended outcomes of our RSE programme are that pupils will:

- Understand that their body belongs to them.
- Understand that there are parts of the body which are private and should not be touched by others; but there may be medical or intimate care instances when it would be appropriate for private body parts to be touched e.g. by a medical professional, parent or carer.
- Understand that it is 'normal' to experience a range of emotions, and develop the skills to manage these feelings;
- Understand that there are many different types of family.
- Understand the characteristics of healthy family life.
- Understand and celebrate diversity.
- Understand that some people choose to identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender + (LGBT+).
- Understand the importance of respecting themselves and others, even when others may be different.
- Understand the importance of friendships, and develop the skills to manage these relationships.
- Recognise whom to trust and not to trust, and understand when and why a friendship is making them unhappy/uncomfortable.
- Understand the physical and emotional changes experienced during puberty, and develop the skills to manage these changes.

- Understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships (including online), and develop the skills to manage these.
- Understand the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships.
- Have the knowledge of where and how to get help or advice.

## **DELIVERY AND CONTENT**

RSE is taught as an integral part of our whole school PSHE programme. PSHE is taught as an independent subject across all year groups. Weekly lessons of 50 minutes are allocated to PSHE. Up to Year 6, PSHE is taught by either the pupils' tutor or the Head of Junior New teachers have specific orientation sessions with the Head of Junior.

Our RSE curriculum takes into account the cultural backgrounds of all our pupils and the views of their parents/carers.

Pupils' learning is assessed by comparison with their starting points, often using baseline assessments and returning to these. Teachers also talk to the pupils and allow them to comment on their own progress through self-assessment tools. It is recognised, that a significant proportion of the pupils' PSHE work is via discussion, role-play, scenarios, etc. and therefore not recorded.

The following considerations apply to teaching in this subject:

- All form groups are mixed ability, and tasks and outcomes are adapted to take this into consideration.
- The diverse range of pupils is recognised and topics are relatable to them.
- Pupils are made to feel safe and supported to enable them to engage with key messages.
- Teaching is sensitive to all pupils' experiences. Certain topics may be difficult for some pupils, so ground rules are in place to ensure confidentiality, respect and safety. Pupils are told that they are not to reveal their own sensitive personal histories or those of any other pupils during lessons. Staff may wish to use an 'ask it, basket' for pupils to write down any questions in case they are embarrassed to ask in front of their peers.
- Matters of equal opportunity are of particular importance in some topics, and staff are mindful of this.
- Pupils with SEND receive additional support as necessary, whether through one to one support, small group work, or tailored learning aids, to help them fully participate in RSE LESSONS
- Staff must adhere to professional standards during discussions.
- Staff must ensure they challenge myths and misconceptions.
- Should any pupil indicate that they may be vulnerable or at risk, the safeguarding procedures outlined in the Child Protection Policy will apply.
- Outside speakers or members of the school nursing team are invited in when appropriate to supplement and enrich what is being taught. All visitors are overseen by staff members and resources checked to ensure that they do not undermine fundamental British Values.
- Pupils learn about RSE topics in an environment that is appropriate to them e.g. a whole class or year group setting, small group or targeted sessions, 1:1 support and digital formats.

## **KEY STAGES 1 & 2**

Pupils will be taught about:

- The correct anatomical names for body parts.
- Personal space, privacy, and boundaries;
- Consent.
- Permission seeking and giving in relationships.
- Emotions.

- Types of families and what constitutes a 'healthy' family.
- Diversity, including LGBT+.
- Puberty.
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Bullying.
- Self-respect and respecting others.
- Stereotypes.
- Friendship.
- Staying safe online.
- How to seek help and report concerns.

Resources are carefully chosen following the Jigsaw programme and PSHE Association resources. Regular feedback is sought from teaching staff and lesson plans and resources reviewed to ensure appropriateness.

### **POLICY AVAILABILITY**

The policy is available on the school website and parents will be reminded of this at the start of the school year. Parents will also be notified before the RSE topics are covered and resources are sent home. This will help parents supplement the learning and help them manage further discussions at home.

### **PARENTAL RIGHT TO WITHDRAW FROM RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION**

There is no parental right to withdraw their child from relationship, health or sex education which is delivered as part of the science curriculum.

Parents have an absolute right to withdraw their child from some or all of RSE lessons.

In the event that a pupil is withdrawn, the Assistant Head Pastoral will provide age-appropriate work. This work will be separate and distinct from the work on RSE. A member of the teaching staff or teaching assistant will supervise the pupil or pupils.

### **Overview of topics covered in Junior School**

<b>Year 1 (age 5-6)</b>	<p><b>Life Cycle of an Animal and a Human</b> Understand that we change and grow and that this is normal. Explain things about myself that have changed since I was a baby.</p> <p><b>Growing and Learning</b> Every time I grow I change a little bit.</p> <p><b>Coping with Change</b> Identify changes that have happened in my life.</p>
<b>Year 2 (age 6-7)</b>	<p><b>Life Cycles in Nature</b> Recognise life cycles in nature and that some changes are out of my control (seasonal, life cycle)</p> <p><b>Growing from Young to Old</b> Recognise that changes from young to old are out of my control and identify people who are older than me that I respect.</p> <p><b>Increasing Independence</b> Recognise that my body has changed since I was a baby and feel proud that I am becoming more independent.</p> <p><b>Differences in Male and Female Bodies</b> Recognise physical differences and body parts using the correct terminology (male, female, vagina, penis, testicles, vulva, anus, public, private)</p> <p><b>Assertiveness</b> Understand that there are different types of touch and I can tell you which ones I like. Understand that I can ask for help.</p>
<b>Year 3 (age 7-8)</b>	<p><b>How Babies Grow</b> Understand changes to animals, including humans, from birth to fully grown. How I feel when I see a baby.</p> <p><b>Understanding a Baby's Needs</b> Understand that babies grow and develop in a mother's uterus; how would I feel if I had a baby in my family? What a baby needs to live and grow.</p> <p><b>Outside Body Changes</b></p>

	<p>Understand that girls' bodies need to change as they grow up so that they can have babies. Recognise how I feel about these changes. Understand that testicles hold sperm and that this is released from the penis. Girls have ovaries that hold eggs. The womb is connected by a passage to ovaries. Slides will be shown of diagrams of body parts. This does not cover how a sperm and egg come together but this question may be raised by pupils. Menstruation (periods) is covered in Year 4.</p> <p><b>Family Stereotypes</b> Understand stereotypes around family and parenting roles and change my ideas.</p>
<b>Year 4 (age 8-9)</b>	<p><b>Being Unique</b> Understand that my personal characteristics come from my birth parents. (adoption may be discussed)</p> <p><b>Girls' (and boys') Puberty</b> Describe how a girl's body changes in order for her to be able to have a baby. Menstruation is a natural process of this (we will discuss menstruation and the use of sanitary towels and tampons) Develop strategies to cope with physical and mental changes through puberty. (Puberty in boys discussed in less detail)</p> <p><b>Accepting Change</b> Know how the circle of change works and apply it to changes I want to make in my life. I am confident enough to try to make changes when I think they will benefit me</p>
<b>Year 5 (age 9-10)</b>	<p><b>Self and Body Image</b> Be aware of my own self-image and how my body-image fits in to that. Know how to develop my self-esteem.</p> <p><b>Puberty for girls and boys</b> Explain how girls' and boys' bodies change during puberty and understand the importance of looking after yourself both physically and emotionally. Understand that puberty is a natural process that happens to everyone and that it will be OK for me. Menstruation (periods) will be covered including the use of sanitary towels and tampons.</p> <p><b>Growing Responsibility and Coping with Change</b> Identify what I am looking forward to about becoming a teenager and understand that it brings growing responsibilities (age of consent) Be confident that I can cope</p>
<b>Year 6 (Age10-11)</b>	<p><b>Self-Image and Body Image</b> Be aware of my own self-image and how my body image fits in to that. Develop my own self-esteem.</p> <p><b>Puberty and Feelings</b> Explain how girls' and boys' bodies change during puberty and understand the importance of looking after yourself physically and emotionally. Express how I feel about the changes that will happen during puberty.</p> <p><b>Conception to Birth</b> Describe how a baby develops from conception through the nine months of pregnancy and how it is born. Recognise how I feel when I reflect on the development and birth of a baby. Understand female and male reproductive systems and how conception occurs including IVF.</p> <p><b>Respect and Consent (Boyfriends and Girlfriends)</b> I understand how being physically attracted to someone changes the nature of the relationship and what that might mean about having a girlfriend/ boyfriend. Understand that respect for one another is essential in a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship and that I should not feel pressured into doing something I don't want to do.</p>

## SENIOR SCHOOL

### AIMS

The objective of our relationship and sex education (RSE) at Talbot Heath is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. We believe a successful RSE programme will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through to adolescence and into adulthood. We aim to help pupils develop their skills and understanding within RSE to help them live confident, healthy and independent lives. RSE plays an important role, alongside other aspects of the curriculum and school life, in helping pupils develop good healthy relationships and deal with difficult moral choices.

Our RSE programme includes physical developments in the human body and associated emotional changes. At Key Stages 3 and 4 the programme includes legal, social, emotional and health issues relating to sexual behaviour, in the context of different attitudes, values, beliefs and morality. We have based our school's Relationships and Sex Education policy on the DCSF guidance document 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance'.

In this document, RSE is defined as ‘... *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 involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It is not the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.*’ We use Relationships and Sex Education to inform children about sexual issues; we do this with regards to matters of morality and individual responsibility and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions.

## **ETHOS**

Within RSE we try to encourage pupils to learn and develop within these three key areas:

### **Attitudes and values:**

1. Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
2. Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable loving relationships.
3. Learning the value of respect, love and care.
4. Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
5. Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

### **Personal and social skills:**

1. Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
2. Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
3. Learning to make choices based on the understanding of different needs and personalities, with an absence of prejudice.
4. Managing conflict.
5. Learning to avoid exploitation and abuse.

### **Knowledge and understanding:**

1. Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
2. Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
3. Learning about contraception and STIs and the full range of local and national sexual health services available to young people.
4. Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay and the avoidance of unwanted pregnancy.
5. Understanding relevant information and issues concerning abortion.

## **CONTENT (An overview of all topic areas covered within the full RSE course)**

These meet National Guidelines for RSE)

<b>TOPIC AREA</b>	<b>What pupils will learn</b>
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.</li> <li>● How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.</li> <li>● What marriage is and why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.</li> <li>● The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li> <li>● How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy</li> </ul>
Respectful relationships,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li> </ul>

including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li> <li>● How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage</li> <li>● That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.</li> <li>● Different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</li> <li>● That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li> <li>● What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</li> <li>● The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.</li> </ul>
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.</li> <li>● About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.</li> <li>● Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.</li> <li>● What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.</li> <li>● The impact of viewing harmful content.</li> <li>● That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.</li> <li>● That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.</li> <li>● How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Awareness that drugs and alcohol can change the way you make rational decisions.</li> <li>● Understanding what spiking is, how to avoid it and what to do if it happens to you or someone you know.</li> <li>● Staying safe on the streets and being aware of how to stay safe in general.</li> <li>● Law on Sexting and indecent images.</li> <li>● How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).</li> </ul>
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.</li> <li>● That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.</li> <li>● The facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.</li> <li>● That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.</li> <li>● That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.</li> <li>● The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.</li> <li>● That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).</li> <li>● How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.</li> <li>● About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.</li> <li>● How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.</li> <li>● How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul>
<u>The Law</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pupils to know the law and what it says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues.</li> <li>● This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships.</li> </ul>

### **DELIVERY**

All senior school pupils are taught RSE across the different year groups. The teaching offered is complementary and supportive of the role of parents and is sensitive to all ethnic backgrounds, religious or other beliefs. RSE is presented in the context of family life, of loving relationships and of respect for self and for others, i.e. in a good moral framework.

RSE is delivered mainly within Science and PSHE lessons. Dedicated sessions are delivered by the Dorset Health team and the ICT coordinator. Other activities and events within school will involve aspects of general sexual issues, awareness and responsibilities, taking account of legislation on this subject. This is to combat ignorance and increase understanding. External speakers also deliver workshops to the pupils, for example Respect Ed.

### **ASSESSMENT/MONITORING**

RSE is continually monitored and updated by SLT and the PSHE/ Science teachers. Staff regularly check for updates and review content and procedures.

Student feedback is encouraged and there are always opportunities for pupils to ask questions or discuss ideas. Pupils are taught by a professional teacher or speaker. All content is age appropriate.

Pupils are always told where they can get correct and reliable information and who they can talk to about any of the issues discussed (Safeguarding leads).

Pupils are aware of helplines, websites and who safeguarding leads are within the school.

PSHE, Science teachers and all pastoral support, use My Concern to report any safeguarding issues.

Pupils participate in student surveys to monitor and attain information regarding RSE issues.

### **PARENT INFORMATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Talbot Heath recognises the importance of the role of the parent in developing a good understanding of relationships and sex. We acknowledge that they are the child's first teacher and understand that they are a significant part of helping a child understand what contributes to a healthy relationship.

Therefore, parents are made aware of the nature of the RSE content and what the main aims and objectives are. Parents are given the right to remove their child from the sex education element of RSE. Parents are encouraged to discuss the reasons for their child withdrawal with the Headteacher.

A child, however, has the right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16). At this point, if they wish to receive sex education they can discuss this with the Head. The Head will then discuss the request with parents and carers and, as appropriate, with the child, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

Schools are advised to keep a record of the withdrawal process and their dialogue with parents relating to requests to withdraw from sex education. Therefore, we advise parents to fill in the form below before speaking to a member of SLT.

**RSE Parental withdrawal form is on the next page.**

**Parental withdrawal from RSE Form**

To be completed by parents			
Name of child:		Tutor group:	

Name of parent:		Date:	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within RSE			
Any other information you would like the School to consider:			
Parent signature:			

To be completed by the School
Agreed action from discussion with the parents:

**NOTE:** Parents are permitted to withdraw their children from RSE up to, and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. From this point the child will decide whether or not they will attend the sessions.