



Blue Coat Church of England Academy

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Date:		27 th January 2026
Prepared by:		L. Haines/ N. McKeon
Ratified by the Governing Body on:		12 th February 2026
	Signature	
Principal		D. Smith
Chair of Governors		L. Parker
Review date:		September 2027

Contents

Rationale.....	3
Roles / Responsibilities	3
Links to other relevant policies	3
Aims and Objectives.....	4
Parental rights to withdraw	5
Planning.....	6
Physical health and mental wellbeing	6
Content	7
Delivery	8
Resources	8
Answering Questions.....	8
Absences	9
Staff Training.....	9
Review, Monitoring and evaluation.....	9
Child Protection	9

“Exercise your freedom by serving God, not by breaking the rules. Treat everyone you meet with dignity. Love your spiritual family. Revere God. Respect the government.” 1 Peter 2:16-17 (The Message)

At Blue Coat Church of England Academy, we live out our school motto *Respice Prospice (Look Back, Look Forward)* by establishing a harmonious learning community grounded in the distinctly Christian values established in biblical teaching and the foundation of the school through its' long and proud history. A strong Christian ethos underpins all the work of the Academy with a strong emphasis on developing faith, including for those who are not from a Christian background. Five key values underpin the school's ethos and all aspects of its work: wisdom, endurance, service, kindness and hope.

Rationale

Following guidance introduced in July 2025, and due to be enforced in September 2026, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory for **all** pupils receiving secondary education. Health Education will also be compulsory in all schools except independent schools. The programme seeks to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils as well as preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life in a digital age. As part of the Education Act 2002/Academies Act 2010 all schools must provide a balanced and broad-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, whilst also preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. As stated in the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to share their views, thoughts and ideas freely on issues that affect them, to be heard, and to be taken seriously (Articles 12 and 13). Children should also be provided with accurate information relating to their health which enables them to live healthy and happy lives, making responsible choices around their wellbeing (Article 24), and also be protected from violence (Article 19) and sexual abuse (Article 34).

Roles / Responsibilities

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education Lead: Mrs L. Haines

Links to other relevant policies

- PHSE Policy
- Child protection policy.
- Behaviour policy.
- Anti-bullying policy.
- SEND policy.
- Equality policy.
- Complaints Procedure.
- Safeguarding Policy.

Sex and Relationships Education is part of our lifelong learning about physical, moral, and emotional development. It combines an understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It is also about sex, sexuality, and sexual health. **It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation, sexual acts or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.** It is, however, about encouraging students to respect themselves and others. As a school we will comply with the relevant requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#) and no student will be discriminated against because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). The school will ensure that RSHE is accessible for all pupils and will comply with the SEND Code of Practice.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of RSHE is to help children build healthy friendships and positive relationships in an age appropriate way. The overall objectives of the RSE curriculum are concerned about raising awareness of attitudes and values, developing personal and social skills, and promoting knowledge and understanding. RSE covers more than biological facts and information. It endeavours to help children develop self-esteem, self-responsibility as well as the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare children to develop caring, stable, healthy relationships. Appreciation of the value of self-respect, dignity, marriage, civil partnership, and parental duty should be encouraged in all pupils together with the sensitivity to the needs of others, loyalty, and acceptance of responsibility. RSE will look at aspects of diversity in an inclusive and non-judgemental way.

“The governing body and the head teacher shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where sex education is given to any registered students at the school, it is given in such a manner as to encourage those students to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life”. Section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Sex and Relationships Education at Blue Coat Church of England Academy is placed within a Christian ethos by which the school is guided. ‘The Church of England encourages relationships and sex education to be placed in a context of Christian teaching and spiritual development, with sexual relationships being understood in the context of loving, faithful relationships.’ (Church of England response to consultation [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education November 2018](#)).

The response from the Church of England to the new RSE curriculum has been established in the development of this policy. Emphasis is given to the Christian ideals of love and respect as well as honesty, integrity, self-control, humility, kindness, forgiveness, and a sense of justice. It is developed equally for both boys as young men as well as girls as young women. The concept of marriage will be taught to students and appropriate time will be given to addressing the importance of resisting the pressure to have sex, why marriage is an important relationship choice and that they have the choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. Relationships will also be taught, taking into account the Church of England guidance.

The programme aims to support students in developing a strong moral and ethical framework, that enables them to make informed, respectful and responsible decisions about relationships, sex and behaviour.

The Sex and Relationships Education curriculum is designed to meet the needs of children whatever their culture, background, or family circumstances. Activities are suitably written to enable all students to access the curriculum. For students who require a support assistant in lessons, provision will be made to ensure that one to one contact is given when appropriate. Provision is always tailored to the needs of students with specific SEND needs in negotiation with the Learning Support department and working with parents.

The prime responsibility for bringing up children lies with Parents/Carers. They are the key figures in helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that come with sexual maturity.

The Sex and Relationships Education policy will be made available to parents/carers in line with the 1996 Education Act. This will be done through the school website and Relationship Education curriculum for the appropriate key stage. Parents/Carers will also be reminded when their child is due to commence studying the Sex and Relationship Education topics through communication from the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education SLT Lead. It is important to distinguish between the school's function of providing a general education about sexual issues and counselling and providing advice to individual pupils on these matters. Good teachers will always take an interest in their student's pastoral welfare, but this should not lead staff to 'trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities' (DfEE Circular S/94).

Special care must be taken in relation to contraception information provided to pupils under sixteen for whom sexual intercourse remains illegal. Under no circumstances will students be given any form of contraceptives within school. However they may be made aware of where they can access such products from outside of school. The general rule must be that giving an individual student advice on such areas without parental knowledge or consent would be an inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibility.

If a teacher is approached by an individual student for specific advice, they should be directed initially to the Safeguarding Team who can arrange an appointment with School Health. Students will also be encouraged by the teacher in question to seek advice from their Parents/Carers where possible.

Students may also be guided to designated staff members providing chaplaincy support if appropriate for counselling, guidance, to give general advice or for reference to the appropriate services.

Parental rights to withdraw

We are committed to ensuring that the education provided to pupils in relationships education / RSE is **appropriate to the age of pupils** and compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from part or all, of the **sex education** delivered as part of statutory RSE. Any such request should be submitted to the Principal in writing. The Principal will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on a child; only in exceptional circumstances the school should not respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. At that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. Where a student is withdrawn appropriate work will be set.

Pupils **may not** be withdrawn from relationships education, or any other element of the PSHE curriculum. Pupils may also not be withdrawn from any of the sex education topics that are also covered by the Science curriculum.

Appendix A provides an overview of how relationships and sex education are defined and organised within our curriculum. *All topics below are delivered at an appropriate age and stage, following guidance from PSHE Association.*

Planning

The Sex and Relationships Education programme has been planned to allow clear progression from as students move through the school. Planning has been done in line with the new Government Policy on RSHE 2026. Lessons will be planned with the needs of all students taken into consideration and will be age appropriate in relation to the content being taught.

Physical health and mental wellbeing

Building on what pupils have learnt at primary school, teaching will focus on enabling pupils to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves. They will be taught about the impact of puberty, understand the physical and emotional changes and how these may impact on their wider health and wellbeing and what steps they can take to support their own health and wellbeing. By the end of secondary school pupils should know more about;

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Content

We will continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary;

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

In addition to the above, it is important for children to know what the law says about sex, relationships, and young people. Teaching about the following will help pupils know what is right and wrong in law, but also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussions about all types of relationships and remaining single. Pupils will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including;

- Marriage
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Contraception and STI's
- Violence against women and girls
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes etc)
- Pornography
- Abortion
- Sexuality
- Gender identity
- Substance misuse
- Violence and exploitation by gangs
- Extremism/radicalisation
- Criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- Hate crime
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Students at KS5 will cover issues taking into consideration and building on Key Stage 4:

- Health and well being
- Relationships and sex education
- Living in the wider world

To reiterate, RSHE does not involve explaining or describing the detail of sexual acts.

Delivery

The delivery of RSE/PSHE will be done in a variety of ways though Personal Development days, within R.E. lessons and using external providers. There are also links to other curriculum areas including: Science, P.E., Food Technology and within elements of the tutor programme.

The RSHE curriculum is organised in the curriculum in a way which develops themes/topics, considering the age and maturation of the children. This means that topics are revisited in greater detail as students get older. All Sex and Relationship Education will be taught in mixed gender groups within normal classroom conditions and a variety of teaching and learning styles will be used to ensure effectiveness and differentiation. Staff will discuss and establish 'ground rules' at the beginning of every lesson which will enable everybody to discuss openly and honestly without fear and embarrassment or judgement. All teachers will endeavour to create a supportive environment for all pupils.

At Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, Relationships, Sex and Health Education will be taught by members of Blue Coat teaching staff from a range of departments, including (but not limited to) the Science, RE, PSHE, PE and English departments.

At times, lessons will also be delivered by other expert teams including the School Nursing team, the NHS, the Police, theatre companies industry professionals and charitable organisations. All speakers who work within Blue Coat Church of England Academy will be shown the school's Sex and Relationships Education policy document and be asked to work within the guidelines laid down.

There will be blocks of lessons available during the weekly timetable to deliver RSHE, plus standalone days in which RSHE topics are covered.

Resources

A variety of resources will be used in the delivering of Sex and Relationships Education. These include the use of actual and dummy contraceptives, images of the human body, images of the effects of Sexually Transmitted Infections on the body, worksheets, card sorts and the use of specially selected internet sites. All resources can be viewed by parents/carers at request before use by their child in Sex and Relationships Education lessons.

Answering Questions

It is inevitable that controversial issues may occur as part of RSE programme and questions will be asked by students. When appropriate, staff taking the lesson will answer student's questions regarding sex and relationships. This will be done sensitively and at a level appropriate to age group and developmental stage. It will also be in an objective manner free from personal bias. However should the member of staff fail to know the answer, or should the question be of a personal nature, they will recommend that the student addresses the question to an appropriate person who could give an appropriate answer.

Members of staff must not give personal advice to students regarding personal sexual activity and relationships. Instead they will recommend trained health advisors who can fully give such

advice and encourage the students to talk to their parent/carers about such issues. Students are made aware that some information cannot be held confidential, and should understand that if certain disclosures are made, certain actions will ensue. At the same time students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

Absences

Parents/carers will be contacted before sex and relationship sessions informing them of the content. This gives the option for students who may have been absent to go and see their Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education teacher, who may refer to the safeguarding team. The safeguarding team may then contact school health to arrange a one-to-one appointment to discuss any issues which they may wish to catch up on.

Staff Training

The SLT Lead for Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education will co-ordinate all staff training regarding Sex and Relationships Education in co-ordination with the member of Senior Leadership Team responsible for staff training. The school will support the use of visitors from outside, such as health professionals, police and voluntary sector, and other organisations to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE. All staff delivering the Sex and Relationships Education curriculum are trained as appropriate when or if the need arises.

Review, Monitoring and evaluation

Reviewing of the Sex and Relationships Education policy will be carried out by the Curriculum Team Leader for PSHE/ Assistant Principal (Pupil Progression).

All policy changes or amendments to the teaching of Sex and Relationships Education will be passed through the school governors. Students will be asked to give feedback as part of the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship department's quality assurance review and through the role of the school council.

All monitoring and evaluation of schemes of work, lessons plans, and outside speaker involvement will be carried out in line with the school's annual departmental evaluation processes. These will include evidence from students, staff and any communications made to the school regarding Sex and Relationships Education.

Child Protection

The delivery of Sex and Relationships Education fits within the school's Child Protection Policy which can be found on the school website. In line with this policy students will be made aware of issues regarding disclosure. The needs of the students are paramount and should be the primary concern for all those involved. However it is essential that students are aware that teachers CANNOT offer unconditional confidentiality. However, students should be reassured that where in the best interest of the student, confidentiality cannot be maintained they will be informed first and supported as appropriate.

If any disclosure is made regarding child abuse the issue must be referred IMMEDIATELY to the child protection officer who is the designated person for dealing with such matters.

Teachers who are delivering Sex and Relationships Education will outline the procedure at the start of every topic and inform pupils of the sources of confidential help which are available such as the visit into school of a nurse who can be seen via appointment, GP and counselling via the Safeguarding Team.

Appendix A – how Relationships and Sex Education are defined and organised within our curriculum.

Relationships Education Topics	Sex Education Topics
<p>Families:- including stable relationships; marriage; forced marriage; separation and bereavement; roles and responsibilities of parents; healthy/safe and unhealthy/unsafe relationships.</p> <p>Respectful Relationships:- features of positive relationships, online and offline, including romantic relationships; kindness, respect, equality and tolerance; respectful communication; bullying and bystanders; skills for ending relationships or friendships and the difficult feelings this may bring; the role of consent including in romantic relationships; stereotypes; how inequalities in power affect relationships; how some sub-cultures (e.g. incels) may influence our understanding of sexual ethics.</p> <p>Online Safety and Awareness:- rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, expectations of online behaviour; risks of sharing information and content online; characteristics of social media including fake, exaggerated or AI generated content and deepfakes; that keeping or forwarding indecent images of someone under 18 is a crime; that sharing indecent images of someone over 18 without consent is a crime; that the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, and content that may encourage misogyny, violence or use of weapons; online bullying, harassment, stalking and coercive behaviour; how information and data is generated, collected, shared, used and shared online; online crime including financial extortion, scams and sextortion; how AI is rapidly developing and the importance of thinking critically before engaging with new technologies.</p> <p>Being Safe:- how to recognise respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships; strategies to identify and resist pressure in relationships, including sexual pressure; how to determine if someone is trustworthy, and judge if a relationship is unsafe; how to increase</p>	<p><i>Topics marked with an asterisk (*) are also covered by the Science national curriculum.</i></p> <p>Respectful Relationships:- how pornography can be harmful to individuals and couples.</p> <p>Online safety and Awareness:- that pornography and other online content often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours, and can negatively affect people and their partners.</p> <p>Being Safe:- that pornography presents some activities as normal, which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful.</p>

personal safety in public places and different social settings; victim blaming; what constitutes sexual harassment or violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, and never the fault of the victim; that harassment includes certain vocabulary, attention, touching, images, pressure, and upskirting; the concepts and laws relating to rape and sexual assault; the concepts and laws relating to harmful behaviour including harassment, violence, and inappropriate sexual language, exploitation, grooming, unwanted and repeated behaviours; domestic violence, controlling or coercive behaviour and forced marriage; the physical, emotional and legal aspects of FGM, virginity testing and hymenoplasty; that strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences regardless of whether it causes injury; how to seek help.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health:- that relationships can be enjoyed without sex; that intimate and sexual relationships should be enjoyable and positive; readiness for sex including the legal age of consent; that they have a choice about whether to have sex and that many people wait until they are older; their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given; the consideration that people might take into account prior to sexual activity e.g. the law, faith and family values; that health can be affected by the choices they make in sex and relationships; that there are choices in relation to pregnancy; how the use of substances can lead people to take risks in sexual behaviour; how to seek help; how to counter misinformation.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health:- the facts about contraceptive choices*; how the different STIs, including HIV, are transmitted and treated*; the prevalence of STIs and the impact on those who contract them.