Beaminster School

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2026

TITLE: **Relationships and Sex Education**	*MANAGEMENT:* **Deputy Headteacher**
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Relationships and Sex Education at Beaminster School

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

At Beaminster School, our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programmes are informed by a Christian understanding of human beings and conducted in an environment characterised by our School Values of Ambition, Service and Kindness, which promote behaviours that are so important for healthy relationships: having high expectations for yourself and others; helping to develop a sense of community; encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their attitudes and behaviour; showing warmth, empathy, generosity and love to others. Jesus said, "Let the Children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven". This verse is a reminder of the importance of creating a safe, caring and supportive environment for their growth.

Beaminster School believes that good quality RSE is an entitlement for all children and young people and will be taught to incorporate values such as: resilience, respect for self and others, self-worth, honesty, courage, integrity and trustworthiness and within the overarching framework of our wh ole school values of Ambition, Service and Kindness.

The 11-18 RSE Curriculum at Beaminster School will:

- ✓ Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, in order to make informed choices
- ✓ Be positively inclusive in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience particularly HIV status and pregnancy
- ✓ Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe intimate relationships and ensure good communication about these issues
- ✓ Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media and on social media
- ✓ Provide opportunities for reflection in order to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care
- ✓ Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner
- ✓ Ensure children and young people are clearly informed of their rights such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding
- ✓ Be relevant and meet the needs of children and young people, and actively involve them as participants, advocates and evaluators in developing good quality provision
- ✓ Be delivered by competent and confident educators
- ✓ Be provided within a learning environment which is safe for the children, young people and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.

The Provision and Delivery of RSE at Beaminster School

Delivery will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEN. RSE is taught within 3 subject areas: Life Studies, PRS and Science. RSE is monitored and evaluated by the RSE Co-ordinator, DSL and Deputy Headteacher with oversight from the Link Governor for RSE.

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be excused from sex education within RSE only.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body and kept under constant review (working with teachers, parents and students), and will be compliant with legal requirements as set out in The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools and DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026.

RSE at Beaminster School will often address aspects of relationships and sex education in an integrated way within a single topic. Programmes of learning prioritise effective delivery of the content, and do not artificially separate sex education and relationships education.

Students will be taught how to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole-school approach. Issues such as every day sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes will be a central focus in RSE at Beaminster and we take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies support all pupils.

At Beaminster we refer to the DfE advice, Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, when dealing with instances of sexual misconduct. This advice sets out what sexual violence and sexual harassment are, the current evidence on their preponderance in schools and colleges, how to minimise the risk of them occurring, and what to do when they do occur or are alleged to have occurred. Beaminster is proactive in making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up.

Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is taken seriously; all staff are aware that statistically it is more likely that females will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment than males, and that it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by males. However, males can also be the victims of sexual violence and it can also happen in same-sex relationships. It is, however, essential that assumptions are not made about the behaviour of boys and young men and that they are not made to feel that this behaviour is an inevitable part of being male; most young men are respectful of young women and each other.

Our scheme of learning promotes an understanding of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment, to help ensure that pupils treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who represent a large minority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised is the starting point to ensure accessibility. Beaminster School is also mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs or learning disabilities. Such factors are taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects. Our teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+)

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, Beaminster School ensures that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. We comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

The church calls us to demonstrate love: John 13:34 exhorts believers to love one another as Jesus loved us. This kind of love extends to everyone, including those in the LGBTQ+ community. Instead of judgement, believers should create safe spaces for dialogue and understanding. Reflecting Christ's love should motivate our actions and words. All teaching at Beaminster School is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. LGBT content is fully integrated into our programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.

Governors

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the Governing Body also makes sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND
- clear information is provided for parents and carers on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

Foundation Governors will also have wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the religious ethos of the schools.

Working with Parents and Carers and the Wider Community

The role of parents and carers in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

Beaminster School works closely with parents and carers when planning and delivering these subjects. Parents and carers know what will be taught and when, and understand they have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE within Life Studies/PRS.

Parents and carers are given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE, which we hope allows parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach and in turn helps to increase confidence in the curriculum.

We have mechanisms in place to engage parents and carers and continue to draw on these as we respond to the new legal framework e.g. Academic Monitoring day, parents' evenings and parent surveys.

Right to be Excused from Sex Education (commonly referred to as the Right to Withdraw)

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request, we believe it is good practice for the Assistant Headteacher to 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. We document this process to ensure a record is kept.

Discussing with parents and carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child, is key to making the right decision for the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher, although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances we would respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during those terms.

This process at Beaminster is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where we may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Working with External Agencies

Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people. At Beaminster, we believe that visitors should enhance teaching by an appropriate member of the teaching staff, rather than be a replacement for teaching by those staff.

We will ensure that any teaching delivered by a visitor fits with their planned programme and our published policy. Content will be age-appropriate and accessible for our pupils. The school's coordinator will see the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan in advance, so that they can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (for example, special educational needs). Agreement will be made about how confidentiality will work in any lesson and the visitor will be advised how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy.

We work with a range of charities, community-based and local authority-run services as well as our churches who are part of our wider community. Representatives from the Church of England and Roman Catholic churches can give valuable insight into Relationships and Sex Education, while providing opportunities for discussion and airing concerns and misunderstandings that may be held.

Appendix 1

By the end of secondary school, the following content will be covered:

Families

Pupils will know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status, for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting
- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful Relationships, including Friendships

Pupils will know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as: 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
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- 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
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- 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.

Online and Media

Pupils will know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- 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
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- the impact of viewing harmful content
- that specifically sexually explicit material, for example 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
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
- what algorithms are
- what misinformation and disinformation is
- the impact of AI on our online safety.

Being Safe

Pupils will know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships
- 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.

Intimate and Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health

Pupils will know:

- 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
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- 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)
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. 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. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including ‘sexting’, youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- deep fakes
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or ‘county lines’ drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM).