

Fir Vale Academy

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Introduction

Relationships and Sex Education enable students to learn about:

- (i) families and people who care for them, including the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children,
- (ii) forming and maintaining caring relationships,
- (iii) the characteristics of healthy and respectful relationships, including online,
- (iv) how relationships may affect physical and mental health and wellbeing, and how to ensure they are safe, and
- (v) intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

Relationships and sex education will only use teaching and materials which are appropriate to the age and the religious background of the students receiving it. The school will ensure that the curriculum remains in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance at all times and be responsive to emerging needs or changes in DfE guidance.

Parental, staff and student involvement regarding the policy

The school will consult with parents and staff on the formation of the policy, and any changes made to it when it is reviewed, which will be at least annually. We will gather the views of teachers, students and parents in the following ways:

- Parents evenings
- Staff meetings
- Student Voice (Pupil Parliament, student panels, form representatives)

Parental right to withdraw children

The school will always recognise that parents have the right to have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. The school will uphold that parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programmes.

In considering such a request, the school will use the following process:

- The Principal should discuss with the parent (and, if appropriate, the child) to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the content that will be covered
- The Principal should discuss with the parent the benefits of the child receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child, including social or emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing from their peers what was covered (and having that content channelled through a child's voice rather than a teacher's)
- Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. safeguarding concerns), the school should 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, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.
- For the vast majority of students with SEND, their SEND should not be a consideration in deciding whether to grant a parental request. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Principal will want to take a student's SEND into account when making this decision

If a student is withdrawn from sex education, the school will ensure that the student receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Teaching and Learning Objectives

The content will be delivered in the main by PSHE teachers to their PSHE classes. However, this may be supported by outside agencies such as South Yorkshire Police who may deliver sessions on themes such as consent and stalking and harassment, or health professionals may deliver sessions on gender specific cancers. The delivery of the subject is monitored and evaluated through the whole school teaching and learning policy.

The religious background of all students will be taken into account when planning teaching and materials, so that sensitive topics are handled appropriately, and that all relationship education teaching will meet the requirements of equality law. Delivery of the content will be made accessible to all relevant students, including those with SEND, through quality first teaching, modelling and scaffolding.

1 Families

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- That there are different types of committed, stable relationships. (Year 7 - 11)
- How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children. (Year 7 - 11)



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- What marriage is, including their legal status, e.g. 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. (Year 8 -10)
- Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into. (Year 7 - 9)
- About the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships. (Year 7-9)
- About the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting. (Year 11)

Students will also know how to:

- Determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy. (Y7)
- Judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe, and recognise this in others' relationships. (Y7 – Y11)
- Seek help or advice if needed, including reporting concerns about others. (Y7 – 11)

2 Respectful relationships, including friendships

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- About 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 relationships. (Y7 – 11)
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. (Y7 – 11)
- How stereotypes, particularly those based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage, e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour. (Y7 – 11)
- That in school and 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. (Y7 – 11)
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to seek help. (Y7 and Y8)
- About the types of behaviour in relationships that can be criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control. (Y7 – 11)
- What constitutes sexual harassment and violence and why these are always unacceptable. (Y8 – Y11)
- About the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010, and that everyone is unique and equal. (Y7 – 11)

3 Online and media

By the end of secondary school, students will know:



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- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, and that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts. (Y7 – 11)
- About online risks, including that material shared with another person has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. (Y7 – 11)
- Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which they receive. (Y7 – 11)
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. (Y7 – 11)
- The impact of viewing harmful content. (Y9 – 11)
- 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. (Y9 – 11)
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties, including jail. (Y7 – 11)
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online. (Y7 – 11)

4 **Being safe**

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- About 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. (Y9 – 11)
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn – this includes online. (Y7 – 11)

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

By the end of secondary school, students 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. (Y7 – 11)
- That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively and negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. (Y9 – 11)
- The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for both men and women. (Y10 – 11)
- The range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others. (Y10 – 11)
- That they have a choice to delay sex or enjoy intimacy without sex. (Y10 – 11)
- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, their effectiveness and options available. (Y9 – 11)
- The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. (Y10 and 11)
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy, with legally and medically accurate, impartial information on all options including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help. (Y10 and 11)



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- How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex and the importance of facts about testing. (Y9 - 11)
- About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. (Y9 - 11)
- How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour. (Y9 - 11)
- How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment. (Y9 - 11)

Complaints

Any complaints about the relationships and sex education programme should be made in accordance with the school's usual complaints procedure.

Policy Review Date

Confirm the date by which the policy will next be reviewed, and which part of the governance structure will carry out that review.

	Date	Name of owner/author
Authorised:	<i>July 2025</i>	<i>J Spurr</i>
Policy Reviewed:	<i>July 2026</i>	<i>Full Governors</i>
Next review date:	<i>September 2026</i>	<i>Full Governors</i>

Governor responsible: T Ball



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