



Bracken Hill School

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

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Policy Type: Whole School

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

The Governors of the school recognise that all staff play a vital role in the achievement of high standards and in providing our pupils with the best opportunities matched to their needs.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This guidance applies to the professional delivery of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) within specified lessons and through spontaneous and unplanned interactions with students.

1.2 Any changes to this guidance will be communicated to staff through the subject co-ordinator or Designated Safeguarding Leads.

2. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND INTENT

2.1 Purpose

This guidance aims to:

- Provide direction and guidance in the delivery of RSE.
- Encourage consistent and professional practice in delivery of RSE.
- Protect students and staff from inappropriate language or conduct.
- Ensure that all staff and stakeholders understand their responsibilities when delivering RSE.

2.2 Scope

This document applies to:

- All permanent, temporary, and casual staff working at Bracken Hill School.
- Pupils.
- Consultants, agency staff, governors, parents, guardians, and others involved in the school community.

2.3 Intent

Bracken Hill School follows the PSHE Association SEND curriculum and policy resources, tailoring RSE to the specific needs of our pupils. As a special needs school, we provide a personalised and structured RSE curriculum that supports emotional, social, and moral development while preparing students for adulthood.

We ensure that RSE is:

- Developmentally appropriate.
- Sensitive to the cognitive and emotional levels of our students.
- Delivered with appropriate visual, sensory, and interactive support.

RSE is incorporated into daily school life, discreet PSHE lessons, and science curricula. We prioritise teaching the importance of stable, loving relationships based on care, love, and respect.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 The Three Learning Pathways

At Bracken Hill School, we recognise that students have a diverse range of needs. Our RSE curriculum follows three distinct pathways to ensure accessibility for all:

1. Explorers Pathway

- Focuses on sensory experiences, understanding emotions, personal boundaries, and safe interactions.
- Delivered through interactive storytelling, sensory-based learning, and structured routines.

2. Adventurers Pathway

- Covers friendships, appropriate touch, recognising emotions, and self-care skills.
- Delivered through role-play, visual supports, and real-life scenarios.

3. Pioneers Pathway

- Covers relationships, puberty, consent, reproduction, and sexual health education in an age-appropriate way.
- Delivered through discussions, group activities, and structured PSHE lessons.

3.2 Ensuring Inclusivity and Meeting Diverse Needs

To ensure that our RSE and PSHE curriculum meets the needs of all students, including those with additional needs and diverse backgrounds, we take a flexible, inclusive, and person-centred approach. We personalise learning by adapting lessons with visual supports, sensory stories, and multi-modal communication like Makaton and AAC to ensure accessibility for all students, including those who are non-verbal. Cultural sensitivity is at the heart of our curriculum, with materials that reflect the diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds of our students, and we engage with parents to ensure content is respectful and appropriate.

Sensory stories are used to explain complex situations, such as experiencing a crush or bodily changes during puberty, in a way that is developmentally appropriate and accessible. By incorporating multisensory elements, we help students process emotions and understand key concepts in a structured and supportive manner.

Our whole-school approach means all staff receive training to deliver RSE and PSHE inclusively, with therapists and specialists supporting us in meeting individual needs. We focus on key life skills such as consent, personal safety, and healthy relationships, using clear, structured teaching to develop social understanding. Families play a key role in this process, with open communication and resources to reinforce learning at home. Finally, we assess progress in a way that reflects each student's individual journey, using engagement and real-life application rather than formal testing. By continuously reviewing

and adapting our approach, we ensure that all students receive a meaningful, accessible, and inclusive RSE and PSHE education.

3.3 Assessing the Impact of RSE and PSHE

To assess the impact of RSE and PSHE lessons on student well-being and personal development, we take a holistic and personalised approach that focuses on engagement, understanding, and real-life application. We observe changes in behaviour, social interactions, and emotional regulation, tracking whether students apply what they've learned in everyday situations, such as recognising emotions, expressing boundaries, or developing self-care skills.

For non-verbal and preverbal students, we assess engagement through body language, facial expressions, and sensory responses, while also encouraging communication through AAC, PECS, or Makaton. We use tools like the Zones of Regulation and social stories to support emotional awareness and check whether students show increased confidence and self-awareness over time. We also incorporate TACPAC therapy, particularly for students on the Explorers Pathway, to support sensory regulation, emotional connection, and body awareness.

3.4 Student Voice in Curriculum Development

Integrating student voice into the RSE and PSHE curriculum is essential to ensuring that lessons are meaningful, accessible, and responsive to their needs. We use a range of adapted methods to capture student thoughts, feelings, and preferences, including observation, AAC communication, and sensory-based feedback.

For students on the Adventurers and Pioneers Pathway, we actively respond to their questions and misconceptions, ensuring lessons are relevant to real-life challenges. Behavioural insights from our Behaviour Watch system further inform our curriculum, allowing us to proactively address areas where students need support.

Our curriculum is reviewed annually, incorporating feedback from students, families, and staff to ensure it remains inclusive, engaging, and relevant.

3.5 Staff Training and Confidence in Delivering RSE

To ensure staff confidence in delivering RSE and PSHE, we provide regular CPD, covering inclusive teaching methods such as Makaton, PECS, AAC, and sensory regulation strategies. Specialist input from therapists, structured resources, and whole-school Behaviour Watch support ensure lessons are responsive to student needs. We hold training sessions introducing new resources, including multisensory social stories, and ensure staff have access to targeted interventions like ELSA, Draw and Talk, and the Zones of Regulation.

3.6 Parent Engagement and Addressing Concerns

We proactively communicate with parents by providing clear curriculum overviews, detailed information packs, and opportunities for discussion before sensitive topics are taught. By maintaining open communication and offering transparency, we ensure that RSE and PSHE are delivered in a way that respects both the school's and families' values while providing essential life skills to students.

3.7 Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the sex education aspects of RSE, but not from relationships education. If a parent wishes to withdraw their child, they should make a written request to the Headteacher. A meeting will then be arranged to discuss the request, ensuring that parents understand the curriculum content and the potential impact of withdrawal on their child's education.

Bracken Hill School is committed to delivering a high-quality, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate RSE curriculum that meets the needs of all students while promoting respect, safety, and positive relationships.