

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

Reviewed: May 2026

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Person responsible for policy: HMT

Introduction

Sex and Relationships Education at Droitwich Spa High School aims to support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development from childhood to adolescence and into adulthood. We believe that Sex & Relationship Education is an essential part of a broad and balanced curriculum. It is delivered to all students in accordance with the school's Equality, diversity and inclusion policy and the requirements of the DfE *Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (2000)* and the more recent Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2026 (starting 1st September 2026) which are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

It has been approved following consultation with relevant Heads of Department (Science, Religious Studies, ICT/Computing, Child Development and PE) as well as students, parents, governors and staff involved in teaching Sex and Relationships.

A copy of this policy is available on the school's website as well as through the school's portal. A hard copy is available at Reception. Curriculum information is also published on the school portal.

1. Aims

We intend to:

- give all students objective and accurate information concerning sexual relationships
- equip them to make considered decisions about their own relationships
- encourage them to respect the needs and rights of others
- foster a sense of moral responsibility
- develop the skills to avoid unwanted sexual experiences
- develop knowledge of how the human body functions and how it develops so that students understand the changes that are happening to their bodies and how these will affect them.
- develop self-esteem, self-awareness and communication skills
- provide support and information for young people and their parents
- provide a secure environment where issues can be explored
- provide opportunities for students to talk with adults, who are prepared to engage with them about issues that are concerning them
- encourage students to accept that others' sexuality may be different from their own
- teach students about aspects of the law regarding sexual relationships and sexuality
- provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships

2. RSE in Key Stage 3

At this age students are going through the early stages of puberty. The topics covered are:

- Changes to the body, emotions and mental health during puberty
- Human fertility
- Contraception
- Personal responsibility for Health (e.g. personal hygiene, healthy habits, internet use)
- The menstrual cycle and gynaecological health

- Sexual Relationships and an individual's health (including STIs, HIV and AIDs).
- Introduction to consent and thinking about personal boundaries and how to set them
- The effect of the media and the internet on body image
- Pornography and the potential for it to affect their relationships and expectations
- Financial exploitation (scams, fraud, extortion, sextortion)
- Child sexual exploitation

3. RSE in Key Stage 4

The topics covered in Key Stage 4 are:

- Human Fertility - how males and females differ in their fertility
- The impact of the Internet and mobile technology on sexual issues and how this might be different for boys and girls
- Peer pressure and how it may affect the choices they make
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Setting boundaries and ending relationships
- Marriage and other types of relationships
- Teenage parenthood
- The dangers of sending nude pictures
- Financially motivated sexual extortion
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Coercive behaviours and their legalities

4. What topics will be covered and when?

The school's RSE programme is taught as part of the PSHE curriculum throughout Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 (See Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school pupils should know). The time allocated to RSE PSHE in each year group is:

Year 8 – one sixty minute lesson every week, meaning 36 hours of PSHE lessons in a year

Year 9 – one sixty minute lesson every week, meaning 36 hours of PSHE lessons in a year

Year 10 – one sixty minute lesson week once a fortnight, meaning 18 hours of PSHE lessons in a year

Year 11 – one sixty minute lesson once a fortnight, meaning 14 hours of PSHE lessons in a year

(PSHE lessons end when GCSE exams start)

a) Year 8

Students learn about the changes that happen to the male/female body during puberty and will learn why these changes happen. They will have the opportunity to ask anonymous questions. Students will go on to consider some of the related health issues (e.g. personal hygiene, sanitary information) and how they can obtain more information in this area. Students also explore how their emotions and mental health may change during puberty, learning that feelings such as worry

are a normal part of life, while also developing the ability to distinguish between typical emotional experiences and potential signs of mental health conditions. They are supported in understanding how to manage these changes in a healthy way, alongside considering the qualities of a good friend. Students will also continue thinking about consent, how to respect boundaries and what this means as they get older.

b) Year 9

This year introduces contraception, its different forms and why they might be used. Students are able to learn about different types of contraception, particularly barrier methods and how to apply these, including the use of appropriate demonstration models. They also discuss choices in different areas of sex and relationships. Students are encouraged to resist peer pressure in these situations, and are given strategies to help them consider how they may respond before they find themselves in that situation. Students also look at Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in detail and consider the most common infections, how they can be treated and how to lower the risks of infection. Students continue to consider relationships of various kinds and have an opportunity to learn about different ways of discussing tricky topics with parents and friends.

Students also consider the internet and how it portrays sex and the sexes. Students explore how the media uses sex to sell products and how this can lead both sexes to be intimidated and persuaded by the media both online and in other areas. Emphasis is placed on how pornography as well as the media presents sex and the sexes and asks whether this is appropriate. Students are encouraged to question the examples being set and whether these are healthy. No pornography is shown during the lesson. This session used to be taught in single sex sessions, but in response to student feedback, these will now be delivered as mixed lessons. This also aims to avoid ~~removes~~ any discrimination or discomfort for transgender students.

Students will be taught how to recognise the signs and risk factors associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), including how grooming can occur both online and offline, and how quickly and subtly young people can be manipulated or coerced into exploitative situations. This will include developing an understanding of power imbalances, consent, and the tactics used by perpetrators. They will also learn about sextortion, including what it is, how it can occur through digital platforms and social media, and the serious emotional, legal, and personal consequences it can have. Pupils will be equipped with strategies to stay safe online, recognise warning signs, and know how and where to seek help and report concerns.

The KS3 curriculum will address online harms with a particular focus on developing pupils' ability to recognise and critically challenge misogyny in digital spaces. Students will explore how harmful attitudes towards women and girls can be perpetuated through social media, including within so-called "incel" (involuntary celibate) communities and by certain online influencers. Teaching will support pupils to understand how these narratives can shape beliefs about relationships, gender roles, consent, and sexual ethics, often promoting unhealthy or harmful expectations. Pupils will be encouraged to think critically about the content they encounter, to question underlying messages, and to develop respectful, values-based perspectives on relationships. The curriculum will also provide strategies for safely responding to and reporting harmful content, while promoting equality, respect, and positive behaviours both online and offline.

c) Year 10 & 11

Students will develop an understanding of human fertility, including how male and female fertility differs, and how this relates to reproductive health and decision-making. They will explore the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships, including both sexual and non-sexual relationships, and will be supported to reflect on their own values and the choices they make. Teaching will address the importance of setting personal boundaries, recognising when relationships are unhealthy, and how to safely and respectfully end relationships when necessary. Pupils will also learn about different types of committed relationships, including marriage and long-term partnerships, and will consider the responsibilities and implications associated with each. In addition, students will examine the realities of teenage parenthood, including the potential challenges and impacts on education, finances, and wellbeing. These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, ensuring that there is no stigmatisation of pupils based on their home circumstances. Teaching reflects the diversity of modern families, including single-parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, and foster carers, among others. Sensitivity is maintained to acknowledge that some pupils may have different support structures, such as looked-after children or young carers, ensuring that all students feel respected and included.

Students will learn about the influence of peer pressure and how it can affect decision-making in relationships and sexual behaviour. Pupils will explore the impact of the internet and mobile technology on sexual attitudes and behaviours, including how experiences and pressures may differ for boys and girls. This will include a clear focus on the risks associated with sharing explicit images, including the legal, emotional, and social consequences of sending nude pictures. Throughout, students will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to make informed, safe, and respectful choices.

The KS4 curriculum will also provide explicit teaching on sexual harassment and sexual violence, ensuring pupils understand the definitions, forms, and legal implications of such behaviours, including peer-on-peer abuse. Lessons will explore issues such as consent, coercion, pressure, and the impact of harmful behaviours both online and offline, including image-based abuse and harassment in social settings. Pupils will examine the social and cultural factors that can contribute to sexual violence, including gender stereotypes, power imbalances, and the influence of media. The programme will also emphasise the importance of respect, clear communication, and bystander intervention, equipping students with the confidence to challenge inappropriate behaviour safely. Additionally, pupils will be informed about support systems, reporting procedures, and their rights, ensuring they know how to seek help for themselves or others.

5. How will we involve and consult students?

Students have been asked for feedback on topics and individual sessions and student satisfaction is high. An online survey has also been conducted via Microsoft Forms. Several lessons have been developed as a result of student feedback and requests.

6. How will we ensure inclusion and differentiate learning?

We will identify students' different starting points and ensure that all students' situations are understood. If a student has a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) this LSA will be assigned to them (unless there is a gender issue when other provision will be made).

We will require students to respect and appreciate many different viewpoints and use these to inform their own decisions. All staff teaching RSE will be expected to do the same.

7. The Involvement of Parents and Carers

We are committed to working with parents and carers. We will offer support by:

- Making this document available on the school website, on the portal and by providing hard copies
- Explaining our RSE policy at the Year 8 parents welcome evening.
- Offering a question and answer evening to parents early in the autumn term.
- Sending out an electronic parental survey via Microsoft Forms

We notify parents about RSE topics by letter and/or email in Year 9 and Year 10.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing, using the form in Appendix 2 and addressed to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

8. How will we ensure the curriculum is balanced?

Consistent with the values already described, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme that includes many different viewpoints to particular situations. When exploring particular issues (such as contraception) students will be taught that different groups hold to different principles. Exploring different viewpoints does *not* mean that the school supports that viewpoint.

9. How will we ensure that our equalities obligations are fulfilled?

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics (*disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation*). At Droitwich Spa High School we strive to do the best for *all* students, irrespective of protected characteristic, educational needs, socioeconomic background, or whether they are looked after children

As well as being given knowledge and information, students will be encouraged to respect diversity. Staff teaching Sex and Relationships Education will be expected to do the same. They will not let any differing personal beliefs and attitudes influence their teaching. All prejudicial views and discrimination will be challenged and dealt with in line with the school's policies.

We will review this policy every year or in light of issues that come up in the local area or in light of national or legal considerations.

10. Who will be responsible for teaching the programme?

The programme will be led and resourced by Heidi Turner, Head of PSHE. The programme is delivered in timetabled lessons by staff who have been given the appropriate training and support to deliver lesson content.

Much of the work of RSE is supported in other areas of the school. See section 11 below

11. How will the RSE policy link to other school policies and other subjects in the curriculum?

The biological aspects of human sexual behaviour and contraception are delivered in National Curriculum Science. These lessons develop scientific knowledge and understanding and do not deal with values, beliefs and attitudes. Where aspects of sexual relationships arise in any other area of the curriculum they are considered in accordance with the values and beliefs framework of this policy. These lessons will involve any students who have been withdrawn from the PSHE Sex Education Programme. Teachers should act with professional judgement and respect students' and parents' views and sensitivities.

Moral choices are also covered in Religious Education; these include looking at fertility and fertility treatment in year 11.

The ICT department will also complete some work on responsible use of the internet as well as moral choices involved.

We liaise with all feeder First and Middle Schools to ensure appropriate continuity and development of Sex Education.

12. What teaching methodologies will be used?

A variety of approaches are used to give students relevant information, enabling moral issues to be explored through discussion and to allow acquisition of appropriate skills. A safe environment for discussion is created by the use of ground rules and distancing techniques. A wide range of appropriate resources is available to teachers of RSE. These are available for inspection by parents on request. Teachers recognise the importance of listening to the concerns of young people, particularly those who may find it more difficult to express emotions.

13. How will students' questions be answered?

Students will have the opportunity to ask questions both openly and in an anonymous way. For example, in the Year 8 lesson on puberty, both the boys and girls have an opportunity to ask questions that may be concerning them by submitting them on a piece of paper.

How will children who are thought to be at risk be supported?

Students are deemed to be at risk if they are:

- involved in situations where they can endanger themselves or others.
- involved in situations where they are being exploited or are exploiting others.

- Victims of abuse, physical/sexual or emotional – this would require referral to the Designated Member of Staff for Safeguarding Children.

If a teacher learns from a student under 16 years of age that he/she is having or contemplating sexual intercourse the teacher should take steps to ensure that :

- wherever possible the young person is persuaded to talk to their parent/carer.
- the young person understands the need for advice on sexual health and is given precise information about where he/she can access confidential contraception advice and services.
- child protection issues are addressed and the Child Protection officer in school informed.

Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre takes its responsibilities as a data controller and data processor seriously and are committed to using any personal data collected and held in accordance with the law. The schools policies, privacy notices and forms in relation to personal data are available for you to view on our web site at www.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk or by using the

<https://website.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk/index.php/communications/information-management-and-data-protection/>

The School's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre, Briar Mill, Droitwich, WR9 0AA or by email at privacy@droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk

Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• 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 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 • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• 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 • What constitutes healthy, respectful relationships, including trust, consent, communication, and equality. How to recognise unhealthy or abusive behaviours, including coercion, control, and manipulation. • How to set and respect boundaries, recognise pressure, and develop confidence in seeking help and support. • Pupils should understand that peer-on-peer abuse can take different forms, is never acceptable, and they should know how to recognise it, respect boundaries, and seek help if they are concerned. • 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 (e.g. 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	• 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 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 • 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 • How to identify deepfakes, the dangers of AI chatbots (such as generating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice), and the risks associated with AI-generated sexual imagery. • The risks of sharing nudes, "sextortion," and the legal consequences of creating or sharing indecent images. • Spotting and tackling misogyny, involuntary celibate (incel) culture, and how online influencers can negatively affect attitudes toward women and girls. • Education on risks such as gambling, gaming monetisation, online scams, and fraud.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	• 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) • To equip students with the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to serious risks, including knife crime, stalking, and strangulation or suffocation. • The facts about sexual harassment, stalking, and upskirting, ensuring students understand that while sexual violence is often gendered, boys can also be victims. • How to challenge all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), including serious harms such as non-fatal strangulation and obsessive behaviours. • The legal consequences of sexual violence and harassment, with an emphasis that such behaviours are never the fault of the victim.
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• 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 • To develop a deep understanding of consent as a continuous process, including the legal capacity to give it and the absolute right to withdraw it at any time. • To empower pupils to identify the nuances of consent and recognize the signs of coercive control and pressure within relationships. • 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 • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • 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/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



Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken. Eg: Joe Bloggs will be taking part in all relationships lessons and during the sex education lessons, he will be working independently on a project in the library