



Melrose Education
SCHOOL



BreakThrough
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

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Rationale

Break Through recognises the entitlement of all learners to receive Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (PSHE), which is current, meaningful, and relevant. Break Through embeds a respect for diversity and encourages a sense of compassion and understanding of others. We recognise and respect that members of the school community are diverse in culture, religious values, and sexual orientation. We also recognise that modern technology brings with it issues of safeguarding and we are committed to addressing online safety in its various forms.

We will ensure that Relationships and Sex Education is accessible for all learners. Delivery and resources will be differentiated and personalised to meet the needs of all young people with SEND, in preparation for adulthood and in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014)

Delivery of the curriculum is underpinned by a trauma-informed approach which recognises the impact of adverse experiences on development, relationships, behaviour and emotional regulation.

Statutory Guidance and Legislation

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all learners receiving secondary education. Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHE Education) continues to be compulsory in independent schools; we include RSE within our whole-school PSHE programme, and Health Education as part of PSHE. Our curriculum fully aligns with the RSE Framework (2026),

This RSE policy is also informed by the following legal guidance:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)

Definition

The Sex Education Forum defines relationships and sex education (RSE) as 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 knowledge, and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Whilst knowledge of biology and the reproductive system is important, RSE is concerned with attitudes and values, personal and social skills, respect for self and others, family, stable loving relationships, feelings, gender roles and decision-making.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Aims

RSE, as part of the PSHE education curriculum, is vital to the development of the young people in our school. The planned programmes are designed to help them deal with the difficult moral, social, and health-related issues that arise in their lives and in society. They also help them to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy, independent lives as individuals, parents, workers, and members of society. Effective RSE is a key component in our approach to safeguarding our learners through the curriculum. The secondary age group is considered vulnerable with respect to the specific safeguarding issues of child exploitation (CCE and CSE) and child on child abuse, including teenage domestic abuse (not singularly violence).

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by learners if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Specifically, our RSE curriculum:

- Provides a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepares learners for puberty and gives them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Helps young people develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy.
- Creates a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teaches and confirms the correct vocabulary for young people to describe themselves and their bodies.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, young people, and parents.

The consultation and policy development process involves the following steps:

1. Review – the staff working group pulls together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation – all school staff are given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent consultation – parents are invited to attend a meeting about the policy and provide feedback through various mechanisms within Autumn 1 term, to quickly provide reassurance.
4. Young people consultation – an enquiry into what exactly young people want from their RSE.
5. Ratification – once amendments are made, the policy is shared with directors and ratified.

Consultation with Young People takes place both formally and informally.

Formally, learner's complete evaluations, with teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs), in their PSHE lessons and ICT. Informally, there is an open dialogue between staff and learners. There is also the use of plenary activities to evaluate knowledge.

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.

Young people 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
- misogyny
- 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 and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)

Inclusion and Equality

Our RSE programmes recognise that young people will bring prior learning and real-life experiences to their learning. Our curriculum respects and builds on these, providing programmes that reflect both the universal and unique needs of our learners. In this way, the programmes recognise and respect learners' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, gender identity, faith, or culture (which may, depending on their age and maturity, not be something they have yet considered or may be emerging) or the sexual orientation, gender identity, faith or culture of their immediate family, close friends, and wider community.

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject learners to discrimination. This includes protection for all the **nine characteristics** stated in the Act. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) and any other groups, including learners with differing experiences and identities. Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between learners, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE 2014b). Break Through further support the education and protection of the **nine characteristics** as it is enshrined in our positive behaviour policy.

Partnerships with Parents

Break Through recognises that parent are crucial to the success of the RSE programme and is committed to providing both information about what is provided and accessible opportunities to comment on policy and practice.

Parents will retain the right to withdraw their child from sex education at Break Through. However, young people can opt into sex education from 3 terms before their 16th birthday and at that point, parents will not have the option to withdraw their children from relationships education or health education. Schools are advised to keep a record of the process of dialogue with parents relating to requests to withdraw from sex education. If you wish to withdraw your child from sex education, please speak to the principal.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using a form available for this purpose and available from the office. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the learner's educational record. The principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative, purposeful, and appropriate work will be given to learners who are withdrawn from sex education.

Confidentiality, Safeguarding and Child Protection

Everyone involved in RSE is clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. Teachers will discuss confidentiality with learners through the development of a group agreement at the start of lessons, making it clear that staff cannot offer unconditional

confidentiality and will report concerns or suspicions to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as outlined in the safeguarding policy.

Delivery of the RSE Curriculum

To ensure both progression and coverage of the statutory curriculum which fully aligns with the RSE Framework (2026), we use the PSHE Association's Education Planning Framework for Learners with SEND and the PSHE Curriculum and Map from Oak National Academy for years 7-11. Our programmes recognise that young people will bring prior learning and real-life experiences to their learning. We respect and build on these, providing programmes that reflect both the universal and unique needs of our learners.

Controversial topics will be covered with sensitivity and respect for all viewpoints. The programmes are not aimed to tell what is right and wrong but to consider different perspectives and provide young people with the information to make their own decisions.

At Break Through, we teach young people in KS3 within mixed-age classes (years 7-9). Key stage 4 are taught within their chronological age groups (years 10 and 11). We have amalgamated the frameworks into a rolling 3-year programme for Key Stage 3 and a 2-year programme for Key Stage 4. Please see appendices 1 and 2. Much of the RSE curriculum is delivered as part of this.

Some young people at Break Through may either be sexually experimental or know friends who are. They will be interested to know what they should expect of a partner and how to talk to them. They will need more information on contraception, sexual health and how to access services. They will want to know about different types of relationships. They may want to know about how to cope with strong feelings and how to cope with the pressures to have sex. They will start to ask questions about parenthood and may like to know how they can talk to a trusted adult. They will also be interested in other influences on sexual decision-making such as the law, different cultures and religious beliefs, pornography, the media and the effects of drugs and alcohol.

Young people at KS4 will need more information on sexual risk, pregnancy, sexual health, fertility, and infertility. They may be keen to discuss gender stereotyping, violence, exploitation, the law, and discrimination. Learning about the relationship between self-esteem and body image and how to challenge negative messages from peers, the media and society is also important.

The curriculum will be developed through the following themes:

- relationships
- feelings and attitudes
- my body
- influences on behaviour
- keeping safe and looking after my sexual health
- people who can help me / sources of help and advice

RSE will be taught primarily within PSHE, but also in Science, ICT and PE lessons. Lessons may be taught as part of a discrete unit, or they may be embedded within other subjects. Further opportunities to identify and plug gaps in knowledge can be embedded throughout our Core Skills' sessions, weekly.

Break Through will offer a flexible approach to delivery where a particular need or concern is identified.

Young people also have regular access, throughout the academic year, to workshops and RSE lessons taught by external organisations promoting positive sexual health and relationships.

Young people will also be signposted to appropriate support and services when required. This may include counselling services, local sexual health services and a school nurse.

How we Assess, Record and Report Learners' Learning and Progress

We will ensure that assessment opportunities are built into the RSE programmes and that RSE is assessed on skills and attributes as well as knowledge. Regular opportunities will be provided to enable learners to reflect on their work and learning, for example, in-class question and answer, discussion, group work, peer assessment, self-assessment and marking.

Learner progress will be tracked by the PSHE teacher and will link with the schools' overall AFL tracking system; outcomes derived via baseline and end of topic assessments.

We will ensure that parents and other stakeholders are provided with feedback and information about learner's outcomes within RSE, at least termly.

The curriculum itself will be quality-assured in a variety of ways including learning walks, drop-ins, Book-Looks, planning, and work scrutiny. This will be done as part of the schools' ongoing Quality Assessment cycle by the senior leadership team.

Roles and Responsibilities

Learners

Young people are expected to participate in RSE and treat others with respect and sensitivity. Alternative work, which focuses on values and self-esteem will be given to those who are withdrawn from RSE.

Staff delivering RSE are Responsible For:

- Planning the curriculum using the school's proformas.
- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way.
- Differentiating and personalising delivery to the needs of the individual.
- Modelling positive attitudes to Relationships and Sex Education.
- Monitoring and tracking progress.
- Responding to the needs of individual young people and issues as they arise.
- Responding appropriately to young people whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the sex education components of RSE.
- Taking responsibility to attend regular CPD to ensure they are confident and have up to date knowledge and understanding.

The Principal and Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Education

The Principal and Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Education are responsible for ensuring that RSE is fully covered and that it is taught consistently well. The principal is responsible for managing requests to withdraw learners from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE. Both will provide regular access to training and development to ensure that staff are confident in their subject knowledge and delivery. The Assistant Principal is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the RSE programmes.

The Directors/SCB members:

The Directors will approve and ratify the RSE policy and hold the senior leadership team to account for its implementation and impact. The SCB members will be responsible for robust monitoring and scrutinising the plans in place.

Policy Review, Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to statutory updates or safeguarding guidance. The Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Learning will lead evaluation of the

programme. As part of this, learners will take part in annual questionnaires and focus group discussions. Relationships and Sex Education can be evaluated by monitoring the decline in recorded instances of homophobic bullying, bullying, use of derogatory language, including genderised/sexual comments.

Links to Other Policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Prevent Duty Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- PSHE/PSHE whole school curriculum overview
- PSHE (incorporating SMSC) Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

Further information

Brook – the UK's leading sexual health charity for young people under 25 www.brook.org.uk

Bish websites – online advice and information for both professionals and young people, created by Justin Hancock, an experienced relationships and sex educator www.bishtraining.com (for professionals) & www.bishuk.com (for young people)

Sex Education Forum – a membership organisation that works together with its members for quality relationships and sex education www.sexeducationforum.org.uk

RSE Hub – a membership organisation that believes that relationships and sex education (RSE) should be an entitlement for all children and young people www.rsehub.org.uk

Family Planning Association – a UK registered charity working to enable people to make informed choices about sex and to enjoy sexual health www.fpa.org.uk

National Aids Trust – the UK's leading charity dedicated to transforming society's response to HIV www.nat.org.uk

PSHE Association, <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/>

In addition, the programme includes identifying the risks to exploitation and extremism, in line with the Prevent guidance (DFE) with a view to safeguarding learners and wider society.

PSHE CURRICULUM PLAN

KS3	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y7/Y8/Y9 YEAR B	Healthy Lifestyles	Self-Care, Support & Safety	Managing Feelings	Changing and Growing	Self-Awareness	The World We Live In
	Taking Care of Physical Health	Keeping Safe Keeping Safe Online	Self Esteem and Respect	Baby to Adulthood Families	Kindness	Equality and Diversity
KS4	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Healthy Lifestyles	Self-Care, Support & Safety	Managing Feelings	Changing and Growing	Self-Awareness	The World We Live In
Y10	Healthy Eating Taking Care of Physical Health Keeping Well Mental Wellbeing	Taking Care of Ourselves Keeping Safe Trust Keeping Safe Online	Identifying and Expressing Feelings Managing Difficult Feelings Self Esteem and Respect Abuse and Bullying	Baby to Adulthood Puberty Feelings Intimate Relationships, Safety, and Consent Families	Who am I? Likes and Dislikes What am I Good at? What do I Need to Learn? Kindness	Community Values Equality and Diversity Laws and Rights Finances
Y11	Healthy Eating Taking Care of Physical Health Keeping Well Mental Wellbeing	Taking Care of Ourselves Keeping Safe Trust Keeping Safe Online	Identifying and Expressing Feelings Managing Difficult Feelings Self Esteem and Respect Abuse and Bullying	Baby to Adulthood Puberty Feelings Intimate Relationships, Safety, and Consent Families	Who am I? Likes and Dislikes What am I Good at? What do I Need to Learn? Kindness	Community Values Equality and Diversity Laws and Rights Finances

Relationships and Sex Education Expectations

By the end of secondary, learners will need to 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 and civil partnerships are, including their legal status (e.g., that marriage and civil partnerships 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 and civil partnerships are 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; how to 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.

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.
- 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).
- Gender stereotypes, misogyny, healthy masculinity, respectful behaviour, influence of online influencers/media.
- That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and 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 behaviour, can damage the way people 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.
- The existence of and risks around AI-generated imagery, manipulated sexual imagery and deepfakes.

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).

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.
- 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.