Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) & Relationship Education (RE) Policy

Responsible Person: Deputy Head **Last Review Date: February 2025** **Next Review Date: February 2026**

Abingdon House School, Purley (AHSP) is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in AHSP documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as updated, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility updated August 2023 considers a 'parent' to include:
all biological parents, whether they are married or not
any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of, among others, the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

Peninsula BrightHR
Peninsula Health and Safety
Atlantic Data (DBS)
Educare (online CPD)
SchoolPro (data protection)
Marsh Commercial (insurance)
VWV (legal)

AHSP is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at AHSP.

The policy documents of AHSP are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect before the scheduled re-publication of a set of policy documents.

Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To promote understanding and tolerance and to prevent discrimination against any of the protected characteristics

2. Statutory requirements

For students in younger years we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

However, we are not required to provide sex education but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At AHSP we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

For students in KS3 and above we must provide RSE to all pupils as per the Children and Social work act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance

2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations

3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties will be invited to attend a meeting about the policy

4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE during PSHE sessions

5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

If there are any changes that occur to the RSE policy during annual reviews, the parents and staff will be consulted, as will students where appropriate (depending on the changes, which will be determined by the Deputy Head).

4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity, personal identity and families. At Abingdon House School, Purley this work takes into consideration the additional needs of our students.

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

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity but about giving students the correct information which promotes their safety and wellbeing.

Relationship Education (RE) is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. Sexuality is included as part of AHSP's diversity programme of teaching. At Abingdon House School, Purley this work takes into consideration the additional needs of our students.

RE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

5.1 - Curriculum Ethos

At Abingdon House School, Purley, our ethos has a direct focus of preparing our students to be happy, healthy and productive members of society, both now and in the future, and as such we feel that RSE is a crucial part of our core curriculum.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Primary sex education will focus on:

● Preparing children for the biological changes that adolescence brings

● How a baby is conceived and born

5.2 - RSE Interventions

A pupil may be referred to receive a Relationships and Sex Education intervention; this may be on an individual basis or as part of a selected group. A referral can be made by a member of staff or parents/carers if there are concerns relating, but not limited to; inappropriate touching, appropriate relationships, body image, changes during puberty, peer pressure, LGBT, human reproduction, boundaries, choices, risk and consequences.

These support systems and interventions are available to all pupils. Individuals are selected and a tailored plan is delivered to meet their needs. Parents/carers will be informed by letter when a pupil accesses this intervention. Parents/carers have the right to opt out by contacting the school directly.

The young person must always be offered the opportunity to discuss their sexual health in a private, confidential environment. All personal information and records are stored securely onsite in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2003 and only shared in the instance of a safeguarding referral.

6. Delivery of RSE

6.1 - The Curriculum

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in the Jigsaw Framework. Students receive one PSHE lesson a week and are delivered through:

- Curriculum written and planned by Deputy Head/DSL, using the Jigsaw PSHE framework and PSHE association.
- Specialist PSHE teaching which is planned by the teachers.
- External agencies used where appropriate to enhance programmes.
- Delivery across the curriculum e.g. biological aspects through the Science curriculum and other aspects through English, Drama, History and as appropriate.
- A wide range of teaching methods can be used to enable students to actively participate in their own learning, including and compromising but not limited to; quizzes, case studies, research, role play, video and small group discussion.
- A range of resources provided by outside agencies including:
  - CEOP/ThinkuKnow
  - NSPCC
  - Betty for Schools
  - UK Safer Internet Centre
  - AMAZE
  - Just Like Us

In recognition of the varying SEN needs, some topics are given extra delivery time as and when needed. This means that classes may receive more or less time on any given topic.

Abingdon House School, Purley may use the expertise of outside agencies. Appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE. SLT will consult on the sourcing of the outside agencies and parents will be informed of any outside agencies chosen to work with our students.

In KS2 relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Consent (through the Jigsaw Framework)

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

In KS3 & 4 RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families

- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

6.2 - Equality & Diversity

Abingdon House School, Purley is committed to equal opportunities and inclusion. Abingdon House School, Purley considers the needs of different groups within the school e.g. gender identity, varying home backgrounds, Sexuality, SEN, LAC, Faith, Ethnicity and Culture etc. The programme is differentiated at point of delivery by trained staff, so it is appropriate to the pupils' age, ability, gender and maturity.

We aim to ensure all pupils are treated fairly, with no discrimination or bullying on grounds of gender, race, religion, colour, language, culture, social circumstances, appearance, sexuality, ability or disability etc.

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 pupils to discrimination. 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, however they choose to identify. Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, 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).

6.3 - Language

The following details the kind of language that will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in RSE lessons. All staff will:
- Openly teach pupils what 'slang' words mean (where appropriate) and that some are offensive.
- Use gender neutral and/or inclusive language (such as partner instead of boyfriend/girlfriend).
- Use technical terminology as this is deemed good practice.
- Avoid the use of any slang and encourage the pupils to follow suit. It is good practice to use medically correct terms for genitalia and sexual parts of the body, for example vulva, vagina, penis and testicles. Ofsted provides full support for this approach (2013) and have raised concerns that some schools are currently failing to teach this vocabulary because this leaves children unable to describe abusive behaviours.

The use of respectful language which challenges sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice (especially with reference to the protected characteristics) can be established in RSE and will have benefits for the whole school community – both in and out of lessons.

(For example, Ofsted found that casual use of homophobic language in schools is often unchallenged (2013). Children and primary and secondary level need to know that using the word 'gay', to mean something is rubbish is wrong).

6.4 - Assessment

The teaching and learning of RSE will be assessed using the following methods:

- Student self-assessment
- Assessment for learning
- Teacher assessment
- Peer assessment

These assessment methods are accumulated by class teachers.

6.5 - Safeguarding

Some issues may result in children and young people making disclosures which will be addressed in line with school safeguarding policy and procedures. RSE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. RSE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

7.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 8).

7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

RSE is led by the deputy head, Emma Stark and taught by teachers Keisha Dalton and Katherine Taylor.

7.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Before any class embarks upon its RSE programme, parents/carers will be informed via an email and will given an overview of the topics the child will be covering. In addition, this policy is accessible to all stakeholders on the school website or by request. As a school which values personal development in our children and young people we ensure our RSE is up to date and regularly evaluated.

8.1 - KS2 students

Parents of children in KS2 do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. The only exception is the specific sections that cover sexuality. above and beyond the statutory science curriculum.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

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

8.2 - KS3 and 4 students

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within 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.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy 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 non-statutory components of sex education.

8.3 - Confidentiality

Parents are welcome, and actively encouraged to discuss RSE education with the school. The school is always willing to listen to specific concerns of individuals or groups of parents. Despite the attempts to set up a proactive system, the school recognises the need to have a reactive one in place too as needs emerge.

The school addresses emerging issues during meetings between appropriate staff members.

All discussions between parents/carers and staff will remain completely confidential, unless in the case that the school deems the discussion to raise safeguarding concerns.

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

Abingdon House School, Purley ensures RSE/PSHE CPD for staff through:
- Opportunities for the Subject Leader to undertake any training required to fulfil the position effectively.
- CPD by trained practitioners to take place for staff involved in teaching the subject.
- Surveys of all staff with regard to RSE content and support required.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by deputy head, through:

The RSE programme is updated and informed by:
- Lesson planning and observations
- Teacher monitoring
- Pupil feedback
- Parent feedback
- New resources
- Changes to legislation

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Deputy Head, annually, and approved by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed
Respectful relationships	• The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • 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 those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online relationships	- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not - That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous - The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them - How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met - How information and data is shared and used online
Being safe	- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) - About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe - That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact - How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know - How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult - How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard - How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so - Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 2: 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

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) - 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
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	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

| relationships, including sexual health | 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 pressuring 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 3: 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	

Appendix 4;

Consultation with parents. What does the school do?

1) Parents will be invited to comment on the RSE policy when it is updated or reviewed.
2) The PTA/ or a working party will be initiated in September 2023 in order to ensure our policy is fit for purpose and to communicate our aims. We will also cover the curriculum content as it develops in order to ensure we meet the needs of our community.
3) A letter will be sent prior to any year group covering any RSE subject. This will, where appropriate, provide parents an opportunity to withdraw their child.