



# Highcliffe School

## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

**New policy pending govt. white paper review – due Sept 2025**

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## **Statement of intent**

At Highcliffe School, we understand the importance of educating students about sex, relationships, and their health, for them to make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives.

The teaching of RSE can help to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental, and physical development of students at school and in the wider society.

We have an obligation to provide students with high-quality, evidence and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the school's RSE curriculum is organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all students. It should be read in conjunction with the schools PSHE policy.

## **How to raise questions:**

This policy aims to answer as many questions as possible but we know parents may have further questions or wish to seek clarification/more information. If you do wish to ask a question or for a phone call please email [office@highcliffeschool.com](mailto:office@highcliffeschool.com) marked for the attention of the RSE subject leader.

## **1. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2021'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Policies
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Records Management Policy
- ICT Technology Acceptable Use Agreement

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring all students make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the RSE curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all students with SEND.
- Providing clear information to parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- Ensuring RSE is resourced, staffed, and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- Creating and keeping up-to-date a separate written statement of this policy and ensuring the statement is published on the school's website and provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.

The Headteacher is responsible (may delegate to a member of Senior Leadership Team):

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring all staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.
- Ensuring parents are fully informed of this policy.

- Reviewing all requests to withdraw students from non-statutory elements of the RSE curriculum.
- Discussing withdrawal requests with parents, and the student if appropriate, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, including the benefits of receiving the education.
- Ensuring withdrawn students receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- Encouraging parents to be involved in consultations regarding reviews of the school's RSE curriculum.
- Reviewing this policy on a bi-annual basis.
- Reporting to the governing board on the effectiveness of this policy and the curriculum.

The RSE subject leader is responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of RSE.
- Working closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the RSE curriculum compliments, and does not duplicate, the content covered in other curriculum subjects.
- Ensuring the curriculum is age-appropriate and of high quality.
- Reviewing changes to the RSE curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of RSE, providing support to staff.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression between each year group.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to RSE.
- Leading staff meetings and ensuring all members of staff involved in the curriculum have received the appropriate training.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the Headteacher.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSE curriculum.
- Promoting knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff.
- Being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a student that have arisen through the teaching of RSE.

Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with, and promoting, this policy.
- Delivering RSE in a manner that is sensitive, of high quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of appropriate teaching methods and resources are used to cover the content.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE.
- Working with the SENDCO (Learning Support Team) and Pastoral Leads (Pastoral Team) to identify and respond to individual needs of students with SEND or Pastoral/Safeguarding

needs. Liaising with the RSE subject leader on key topics, resources and support for individual students.

- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of RSE or health education to the RSE subject leader or a member of the SLT.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that students may make as a result of the subject content to the DSL.
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents have requested to withdraw them from the non-statutory components of RSE, by providing them with alternative education opportunities.

The SENDCO is responsible for:

- Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support students' individual needs.
- Advising staff on the use of TAs in order to meet students' individual needs.

### **3. Organisation of the RSE curriculum**

For the purpose of this policy:

- “RSE” is used to refer to the overall programme of relationships, sex education.
- “RSE” refers to relationships and sex education and is defined as teaching students about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and helping them to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

The RSE curriculum has been developed, and will be monitored and reviewed, in consultation with teachers, students and parents, and in accordance with DfE recommendations. We will gather the views of teachers, students and parents in the following ways:

- Questionnaires
- Briefings/Meetings
- Letters

The majority of the RSE curriculum is delivered through PSHE Education (named EPD on timetables), with statutory elements taught via the science curriculum. The RSE subject leader will work closely with their colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum complements and does not duplicate the content covered in national curriculum subjects.

The school will ensure that the curriculum remains in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) guidance at all times. The religious background of all students will be considered when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

### **4. RSE subject overview**

RSE will continue to develop students' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section. The PSHE policy should be read in conjunction with this RSE policy.

#### **Families**

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- 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.
- About the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- About the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.

Students will also know 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 recognise this in others' relationships.
- Seek help or advice if needed, including reporting concerns about others.

### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- About the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships in all contexts (including online), including trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different types of relationships (sexual and non-sexual).
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- How stereotypes, particularly those based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage, e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour.
- That in school and wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- About different types of bullying (including online/cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to seek help.
- About the types of behaviour in relationships that can be criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- About the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010, and that everyone is unique and equal.

### **Online and media**

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, and that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts.
- About online risks, including that material shared with another person has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.

- Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which they receive.
- 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 is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties, including jail.
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

### **Being safe**

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- About the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn – this includes online.

### **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships (including defining sexual active), 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 and 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 both men and women.
- The 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 enjoy intimacy without sex.
- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, their effectiveness and options available.
- The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy, with legally and medically accurate, impartial information on all options including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.
- How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex and the importance of 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.

## 5. Programme of study

The school will determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people and includes the statutory content outlined in Section 4 of this policy.

*Please note that any teaching of Relationship and Sex Education will occur from AFTER February half-term each academic year. Notifications/Reminders of what is covered will be sent home by email before February half-term.*

Relationship and Sex Education programmes of study	
<b>Year 7</b>	<p><b>Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different relationships and types of love.</li> <li>• Exploring sexual attraction and orientation (Key words, assumptions and defining). This will cover sexual orientation definitions for Bi, Lesbian, Gay, Heterosexual, LGBTQ.</li> <li>• Transgender term defined</li> <li>• Different attitudes to sex (Age, religion and culture) including UK Law of sexual consent</li> </ul> <p><b>You and Your Body - Puberty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What causes puberty.</li> <li>• What is puberty.</li> <li>• What happens to boys in puberty (physical changes, emotional).</li> <li>• What happens to girls in puberty (physical changes, emotional changes).</li> <li>• Periods: the facts.</li> </ul> <p><b>You and Other People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You and your family (Roles within the family).</li> <li>• Family conflict resolution.</li> <li>• Friendships (Good and bad) – links to relationships.</li> <li>• Rivalries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sex – Rights, Responsibilities and the Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sex: Definition of sexual activity as any contact/touching the genitals or private areas of another individual.</li> <li>• Sex: The Law regarding sex being illegal under the age of 16.</li> <li>• Right and Responsibilities (Consent, Right to Privacy, Right to Express Feelings)</li> <li>• Indecent images (Up-skirting, down-blousing, sexting).</li> </ul> <p><b>Bullying</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of bullying (Physical, verbal indirect cyber, neglect and sexual).</li> <li>• Reasons for bullying and solutions to bullying.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Internet</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advantages and disadvantages.</li> <li>• Pornography – dangers and potential challenges in relation to teenage modelling.</li> <li>• Pornography – UK law regarding age to access</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyber bullying – How to deal with it.</li> <li>• How to be safe online.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 8</b>	<p><b>Your Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different relationships and types of love including covering content from Year 7</li> <li>• Being in Romantic love.</li> <li>• Healthy relationships (romantic and platonic).</li> <li>• Signs of unhealthy relationships.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sex and Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent (the law in UK and around the world, understanding consent) including that sex is illegal in the UK until aged 16.</li> <li>• Laws: Rape and Sexual Assault, Indecent Exposure, Indecent Images</li> <li>• Contraception Methods (Condom, Pill and Morning After Pill)</li> <li>• Reasons and pressures relating to sexual encounters.</li> </ul> <p><b>Safer Sex (Building upon the topics covered in year 7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual transmitted Infections (what they are? symptoms and how to protect against them).</li> <li>• STI's (What a sexual health clinic is, does and treatment).</li> <li>• Pregnancy</li> </ul> <p><b>Staying Safe From Abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different types of abuse.</li> <li>• What is grooming and strategies to stay safe.</li> <li>• Sexting (What is sexting, the dangers of sexting and identifying ways of protecting yourself online).</li> </ul>
<b>Year 9</b>	<p><b>Sexuality and Gender</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building and understanding and acceptance of various ways that sexuality develops .</li> <li>• Explore the issues surrounding sexuality (Healthy and unhealthy behaviours and sexual attitudes).</li> <li>• What influences our views about sex, sexuality and gender.</li> <li>• To understand the difference related to gender identity and transgender.</li> </ul> <p><b>You and Your Rights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women's rights.</li> <li>• Violence and sexual harassment (Covering various genders).</li> <li>• Your rights in relation to cultural practices (Forced marriages, FGM, breast ironing).</li> <li>• Homophobic behaviour in relation to LGBTQ+.</li> </ul> <p><b>You and Your Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sex: Definition of sexual activity expanded upon to include Vaginal Sex, Anal Sex and Oral Sex</li> <li>• Consent (UK law).</li> <li>• Pressure to have sex.</li> <li>• Pornography and the law.</li> <li>• Consequences of sex (STI, unplanned pregnancy and regret).</li> <li>• Types of contraception (How they are administered, how they work and what they protect you from).</li> <li>• Condom demonstration.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using contraception whilst under influence of alcohol.</li> <li>• Being safe at Parties (alcohol and sex).</li> </ul> <p><b>Pregnancy and Parenthood</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships (Communication, Consideration, Compromise, Co-operation).</li> <li>• Are you ready to have sex in your relationship (Using 4 C's, adult conversations and boundaries)?</li> <li>• Pregnancy (Symptoms, testing, miscarriage, fertility and options available).</li> <li>• Being a teenage parent.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 10</b>	<p><b>Sex and Relationship Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent (the law).</li> <li>• Sexual offences (Sexual Assault, Assault by penetration and Rape).</li> <li>• Protecting LGBTQ+ (discrimination laws).</li> </ul> <p><b>Keeping Sexually Healthy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical and mental health.</li> <li>• Protecting against STI and pregnancy.</li> <li>• Contraception (methods, emergency contraception).</li> </ul> <p><b>Sexual Content Online</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual imagery (the law).</li> <li>• You and indecent images online.</li> <li>• What is pornography?</li> <li>• Pornography and the law.</li> <li>• Why can pornography be harmful.</li> </ul> <p><b>Gender</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sex, gender and gender identity.</li> <li>• Being intersex.</li> <li>• Common gender terminology (covering a wide variety of gender identities).</li> </ul> <p><b>Sexuality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That there is a wide variety of different sexual identities.</li> <li>• Coming out.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 11</b>	<p><b>Parenthood</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding fertility, infertility and miscarriage</li> <li>• Different routes to parenthood</li> <li>• Where to get reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul> <p>Year 11 is also used to catch-up any content that needs to be recapped due to any issues in previous years.</p>
<b>Sixth Form</b>	<p><b>Safer Sex</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of gaining consent and the right to withdraw consent</li> <li>• The importance of appropriate use of contraception and the impact of parenthood</li> <li>• How to recognise different sexual health challenges and how to manage them effectively</li> <li>• Healthy and Respectful Relationships</li> </ul>

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## 6. Consent (School Definitions)

The school is aware that it has a duty to teach the legal age of sexual consent is 16 year old. The school is also aware that a proportion of young people will become sexually active before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and that education is most powerful when delivered before it is needed.

The school has taken advice from Dorset Police and read the prosecution guidance from the Criminal Prosecution Service and has taken in to account the difference in guidance for those students below the age of 13. Therefore **in all lessons** where Sexual Activity is discussed the following definitions of consent will be used.

Years 7 and 8

*'There are a number of laws about sex that are there to protect you. In the United kingdom, if you are under the age of 16 you are not allowed to take part in any sexual activities (including sexual touching). An adult engaging in sexual activity with someone under 16 would be committing a serious offence'*

Years 9 onwards

*'There are a number of laws about sex that are there to protect you. In the United Kingdom, if you are under the age of 16 you are not legally allowed to take part in any sexual activities (including sexual touching). (from the age of 13 any decision to prosecute for sexual activity with someone your own age would be based on if consent was mutual along with other factors). However, an adult engaging in sexual activity with someone under 16 would be committing a serious offence.) Any sexual activity with or by someone under 13 is always illegal'*

## 7. Delivery of the curriculum

Through effective organisation and delivery of the RSE, we will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to students clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for students to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

RSE complement several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.

The RSE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

The curriculum will proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on student's physical, emotional and sexual development. RSE will be delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows students to ask questions in a safe environment.

Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly in the Equality Act 2010, so that students understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.

The school will integrate LGBTQ+ content into the RSE curriculum – this content will be taught as part of the overall curriculum, rather than a standalone topic or lesson. LGBTQ+ content will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate and factual way that allows students to explore gender identity and the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships.

All students are expected to learn about LGBTQ+ content, and parents do not have a statutory right to withdraw their children from lessons that include LGBTQ+ content.

The curriculum will be designed to focus on students of all gender identities and expressions and activities will be planned to ensure all are actively involved.

The school will ensure it delivers teaching on sensitive topics, e.g. the body, in a way that is appropriate and sensitive to the various needs of the school community, e.g. cultural background.

All teaching and resources will be assessed by the RSE subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of students, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any SEND, if applicable. Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning. Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of students. Students will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the school's Online Safety Policy, and Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement.

Teachers will establish what is appropriate for whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programmes accordingly. Teachers will ensure that students' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and honestly.

Teachers will focus on the importance of healthy relationships, including marriage, when teaching RSE, though sensitivity will always be given as to not stigmatise students on the basis of their home circumstances. In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that students may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.

Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of students based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.

At all points of delivery of the curriculum, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how, will be planned in conjunction with parents.

The procedures for assessing student progress are outlined in [section 15](#) of this policy.

## 8. Curriculum links

The school will seek opportunities to draw links between RSE and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance students' learning. As examples the RSE curriculum links to the following subjects:

- **Science** – students are taught about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows, including puberty.
- **ICT and computing** – students are taught about how they can keep themselves safe online and the different risks that they may face online as they get older.
- **PE** – students can develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and lead healthy, active lives.
- **Religious Studies** – beliefs, attitudes and values. Medical ethics, human relationships, extremism. Attitudes towards relationships.
- **PSHE** – students learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.

## 9. Working with parents

The school understands that parents' role in the development of their children's understanding about relationships, sex and health is vital and will, therefore, engage parents as far as possible in their children's learning. This will include providing parents with opportunities to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to RSE formally (normally once a year at the start of the school year)

The school will consult closely with parents (both via the Parents Forum and via online consultations) when reviewing the content of the school's RSE curriculum, and will be given regular opportunities to voice their opinions and concerns. The school will use the views of parents to inform decisions made about the curriculum content and delivery; however, parents will not be granted a 'veto' on curriculum content, and all final decisions will be the school's to make.

When in consultation with parents, the school will provide:

- The curriculum content, including what will be taught and when.
- Examples of the resources the school intends to use to deliver the curriculum.
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE.

The school will remain aware that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents. If parents have concerns regarding RSE, they will contact the school to arrange a discussion.

### Keeping Parents Informed

Parents will receive the planned curriculum at the start of each academic year via letter/email and a reminder will be distributed two weeks before the teaching begins. For students not opted out the letter will include how to work with the school to find out more and how to express a desire for their children to be withdrawn.

Where a student is opted out a letter detailing the content will be shared with parents to give the opportunity to opt student back in to lessons if desired.

School will also give opportunities via year group parent briefings to hear about RSE and ask any questions. These sessions will be published on the school calendar and in the student/parent bulletin.

## **10. Working with external agencies**

Working with external agencies will be used to enhance our delivery of RSE and bring in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging students. External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the RSE curriculum but will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

When working with external agencies, the school will:

- Check the visitor credentials of all external agencies.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the external experts fits with the planned curriculum and provisions of this policy.
- Discuss with the visitor the details of how they intend to deliver their sessions and ensure the content is age-appropriate and accessible for all students.
- Request copies of the materials and lesson plans the visitor will use, to ensure it meets the full range of students' needs.
- Agree with the agency on how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports must be dealt with in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will use visitors to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of teaching staff, not to replace teaching by those staff.

## **11. Withdrawal from lessons including how to**

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

Requests to withdraw a child from sex education will be made to the Headteacher via email or writing. Emails should be sent to [office@highcliffeschool.com](mailto:office@highcliffeschool.com) for the attention of the Head Teacher and RSE Subject Leader.

Before granting a withdrawal request, the school will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the student, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The Headteacher will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have. All discussions with parents will be documented.

Following discussions with parents, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child (up to the age of 16).

Students who are withdrawn from RSE will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal (via the schools Jubilee provision).

For requests concerning the withdrawal of a student with SEND, the RSE co-ordinator and SENDCO will take the students' specific needs into account when making their decision.

*NOTE: Withdrawal from RSE in one academic year will automatically roll forward to following academic years. Students can be opted back in by parents at any point or will automatically be opted back in once in Year 12 where they are able to make their own decision to stay in/out of classes.*

## **12. Equality and accessibility**

The school will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against students because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

The school will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of its students and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for students with the above protected characteristics.

The school will design the RSE curriculum to be inclusive of all students. The school will be aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to their characteristics, e.g. SEND, previous safeguarding issues or being LGBTQ+. Teachers will understand that they may need to work with the SENDCO/Pastoral Team to adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to students with SEND/Safeguarding.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of students at different developmental stages, the school will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

The school will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between all students and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on students based on their gender or any other characteristic.

The school will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and managed promptly. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

## **13. Safeguarding and confidentiality**

All students will be taught about keeping themselves safe, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.



To meet DfE's best practice advice, the DSL will be involved in the formulation and review of safeguarding-related areas of the curriculum, as the knowledge and resources may help to address safeguarding issues more appropriately and effectively.

When teaching issues that are particularly sensitive for students of all ages, e.g. self-harm or suicide, teachers will be made aware of the risks of inadvertently encouraging, or providing instructions to, students. Teaching of these subjects will always prioritise preventing harm to students as a central goal.

Confidentiality within the classroom will be an important component of RSE, and teachers will be expected to respect the confidentiality of their students as far as is possible, in compliance with the school's Student Confidentiality Policy.

Teachers will, however, understand that some aspects of RSE may lead to a student raising a safeguarding concern, e.g. disclosing that they are being abused, and that if a disclosure is made, the DSL will be alerted immediately. Students will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report, and how their report will be handled – this includes the process for when they have a concern about a peer.

#### **14. Curriculum Expectations**

The school will have the same high expectations of the quality of students' work in RSE as for other curriculum areas. Lessons will be planned to provide suitable challenge.

#### **15. Monitoring and review**

The RSE subject leader will be responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subject. They will conduct learning walks in line with the schools learning and teaching policy.

*Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 are in place as example communications. These would be sent at the start of the school year and then 2 weeks before the start of the teaching of the content.*

#### Appendix 1 – Example Letter to Parents Detailing Curriculum to be Taught (not opted out)

Dear Parent

At Highcliffe School, we believe that promoting the health and wellbeing of our students is an important part of their overall education.

Throughout the academic year and as part of our broader Ethical and Personal Development curriculum (EPD) we will be exploring a range of topics related to Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE). From [DATE]/[TERM] we will introduce Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

Some parts of RSE are compulsory, such as elements taught within the Science curriculum. Parents can withdraw their children from all other parts of RSE if they wish to do so. However, we believe that it is important for all young people to have a place to discuss peer pressures, check facts and dispel myths. Even if a child is withdrawn, students will inevitably discuss such issues with each other outside the classroom resulting in hearing about the content second hand. We hope all children will have the opportunity to participate in our carefully planned lessons to ensure they receive correct information and advice.

Content covered in this academic year is:

[Include Content]

More information about the school approach to Relationship and Sex Education can be found in our policy at [include link]. If you have any questions about the delivery or content covered in RSE, please do not hesitate to contact [include contact details]

## Appendix 2 – Example Letter to Parents Detailing Curriculum to be Taught (presently opted out)

Dear Parent

I am writing to you regarding the Relationship and Sex Education content that is due to be covered this academic year. We are aware that [NAME] is presently withdrawn and will remain withdrawn unless you wish to opt them back in.

Some parts of RSE are compulsory, such as elements taught within the Science curriculum. Parents can withdraw their children from all other parts of RSE if they wish to do so. However, we believe that it is important for all young people to have a place to discuss peer pressures, check facts and dispel myths. Even if a child is withdrawn, students will inevitably discuss such issues with each other outside the classroom resulting in hearing about the content second hand. We hope all children will have the opportunity to participate in our carefully planned lessons to ensure they receive correct information and advice.

Content covered in this academic year is:

[Include Content]

More information about the school approach to Relationship and Sex Education can be found in our policy at [include link]. If you have any questions about the delivery or content covered in RSE, please do not hesitate to contact [include contact details].

If you would like to opt [NAME] back in please email the school office marked for the attention of the RSE Subject Leader. If you wish for [NAME] to continue to be withdrawn you need take no action.