



Relationship and Sex Education Policy of Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust

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Introduction

At Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust (BTCT) we are committed to providing an environment that nurtures and transforms the lives of the children and young people attending our schools, ensuring that they receive a well-balanced curriculum that caters for their academic, as well as personal, social, health and emotional needs. An education that also prepares our young people with the knowledge and understanding to make appropriate decisions about their personal and social behaviour, in a world where our young peoples lives are lived on and offline.

BTCT acknowledges that much of this education is received at home and as such the curriculum at BTCT is already designed to complement and build on what our children learn at home, ensuring that all of our children receive the same level and breadth of education. In this, all of our students currently receive Personal, Social, Health and Citizens Education (PSHCE) alongside their academic subjects.

From September 2020, the specific teaching of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) to all children in KS1 – KS4 will be a statutory requirement. Much of this curriculum is already taught within PSHCE and some elements are covered within the curriculums for Science, IT and PE. This document sets out to formalise the RSE curriculum that each of our young people will receive at BTCT.

This policy is based on the Department for Education (DfE) Guidelines (2019)

Full details of what each child should know by the end of primary and secondary are set out in Appendix 1 & Appendix 2, respectively.

Definitions & Rationale

We define ‘relationships and sex education’ as learning about physical, moral and emotional development that students need in order to understand the relationship they have with those around them and their own and others sexuality. 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. It is about the physical, emotional, social, cultural, moral and legal dimensions of personal identity, human relationships and sexuality as well as factual teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health.

Although it is now a statutory requirement, at BTCT we believe it is important to address this area of the curriculum. Our young people have a right to an education that will inform and empower them to make safe and healthy decisions about their bodies, their health and their relationships, both off and online. 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 pupils through the curriculum.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Schools Commitment

The RSE curriculum at BTCT will:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Enable pupils to identify healthy relationships, both on and offline
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of overall good health and personal hygiene

The curriculum will be underpinned by the values of BTCT in that every child will achieve. The curriculum will be delivered in a supportive and safe environment, which celebrates our diversity and allows students to discuss, share and evaluate RSE, in a way that provides a basis for lifelong learning.

Statutory Responsibilities

BTCT teaches children across a number of different settings from KS1 – KS5. This document sets out the policy for teaching of RSE across KS1 – KS4 only. Broadly speaking KS1 – KS2 are taught in a primary setting and KS3 – KS4 are taught in a secondary setting, although there are variations in the structure of the schools within BTCT.

All students within KS1 – KS4 must be provided with relationships education, as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

All students within KS3 – KS4 must be provided with sex education, as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. Sex education is not compulsory at KS1 & KS2, however individual schools may decide to include Sex education within their curriculum. In which case, primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Policy Development

This policy forms and overarching policy for the whole of BTCT. It has completed through consultation with key stakeholders including senior management, governors and trustees.

Each school within the trust will develop a policy specific to demographic of students taught by that school. These individual school policies will be developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents and whilst no formal structure for the development of individual policies is proposed, they will likely involve the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group will collate all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff will be given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties will be invited to comment on the policy, directly (at a meeting) or indirectly (via a questionnaire etc).
4. Pupil consultation – we will investigate what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments are made, the policy will be shared with Academy governors and ratified

Structure and Outcomes

RSE will be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. The curriculum on relationships and sex will complement and be supported by BTCT and Academies wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, anti-bullying and safeguarding. RSE will sit within the context of BTCT's and each Academy's broader ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally; and its pastoral care system.

All Academies teaching KS3 and KS4 within BTCT will deliver the content set out in Appendix 2 in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum which complements, rather than duplicates, the content covered in national curriculum subjects such as citizenship, science, computing and PE.

A detailed structure of what is present in the RSE curriculum for each Academy can be found within each of the specific Academy policies.

Through the RSE Curriculum at KS1 and KS2, we aim for children to be able to:

- Develop the confidence to talk, listen and think about feelings and relationships
- Make and maintain friendships, based on respect, responsibility, love and care.

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- Understand and respect different types of families, including families with same sex parents
- Develop positive attitudes about growing up and consider other people's attitudes and values
- Challenge and prevent discrimination, stereotypes and bullying based on gender, and sexual orientation and promote equality and respect in all relationships.
- Know the correct biological names for the parts of the body, including the male and female reproductive parts
- Know and understand about emotional, social and physical changes at puberty
- Know and understand about reproduction
- Know about human sexuality
- Keep safe online and offline and recognise when something is risky or unsafe
- Know where are how to seek information and advice when they need help or have concerns/misconceptions.

A full breakdown of the DfE RSE policy for KS1 & KS2 can be found in Appendix 1.

Through the RSE curriculum at KS3 and KS4, we aim for our young people to

- understand that good nutrition and appropriate exercise supports a positive physical, emotional and mental health, including positive self-esteem;
- make and maintain healthy, fulfilling relationships, both on and offline;
- understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect and to understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing;
- distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful;
- be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way;
- Understand the physical, hormonal and emotional factors linked to puberty, reproduction, pregnancy and birth.
- recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk;
- recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and when to report issues to keep them safe online;
- be able to, within the law, be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.
- To recognise the emotions associated with loss or change within a relationship, such as divorce, separation and new family members and manage them positively or know where to seek help to do so.

A full breakdown of the DfE RSE policy for KS3 & KS4 can be found in Appendix 2.

Inclusion and Equality

In teaching RSE we recognise that young people will bring prior learning and real-life experiences to their learning and our curriculum endeavours to respect and build on them.

In this way, our curriculum recognises and respects pupils' 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.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

RSE will be accessible for all pupils. High quality teaching is differentiated and personalised, this is the starting point to ensure accessibility for all pupils. Academies will also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when preparing these subjects for pupils with SEND.

The Trust is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education can also be a priority for some pupils, for example some with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs or learning disabilities.

For some pupils there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meeting the specific needs of children at different development stages.

Assessment of Learning

As with any learning, the assessment of young people's personal, social and emotional development is important. It provides information that indicates their progress and achievement informs the development of the programme.

Young people do not pass or fail in this area of learning. Opportunities to reflect on their own learning and personal experiences and to set personal goals and agree strategies to reach them will be provided. This process of reflective assessment has a positive impact on young people's self-awareness and self-esteem, and there are opportunities to record learning and progress in different ways.

We will assess pupil's learning through; in class question and answer, discussion, group work, peer assessment, self-assessment and marking.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust

The Trust will:

- Provide a suite of fully resourced RSE lesson plans for all key stages.
- Monitor the implementation of the policy across all Academies within the Trust
- Monitor pupil progress to ensure that pupils achieve expected outcomes but aspire to achieve beyond their personal best
- Support the professional development of all staff, in relation to RSE, across BCT, including inset training, as required.

The Academy Board of Governors

The Academy Board of Governors will ensure:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- The subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- That the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- That the teaching of RSE is staffed and resourced in a way that ensures the Academy can fulfil its legal obligations.

Headteacher/Principal of Academy

The Headteacher/Principal of Academy will ensure that:

- All staff are informed of the policy and the responsibilities included within the policy;
- All teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support subjects;
- The subjects are staffed and timetabled in a way to ensure BCT and the Academy fulfils their legal obligations;
- The teaching of RSE is monitored to ensure that it is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- The Academy works with parents/carers when planning and delivering RSE to pupils.
- Clear information is provided to parents/carers on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.

Staff

All staff will ensure that:

- Ground rules are negotiated with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or breach of confidentiality;
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support;
- At all times teaching will take place in the context of an explicit moral framework;

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- All points of view they may express during the course of teaching RSE are unbiased;
- The teaching of RSE is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- The emphasis of teaching RSE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices; Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSE;
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is inappropriate for staff to give students personal advice on matters such as contraception;
- Where a student has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the student is aware of the implications of their behaviour. The member of staff should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parents/Carers

The Trust acknowledges the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents/carers are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow, mature and to form healthy relationships.

All Parents/Carers will be:

- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE;
- Encouraged to participate in the development of Relationships Education and RSE;
- Able to discuss any concerns directly with the Academy.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Engage fully in lessons and activities of the RSE curriculum;
- Abide by the agreed ground rules and structures put in place to allow safe and respectful conversations to take place;
- Treat others with respect and sensitivity;
- Seek help, support and clarification from appropriate teaching/pastoral staff, who may direct them to an alternative member of staff or external agency;
- Understand that in the teaching of RSE, teachers/pastoral staff will not provide personal advice.

Right to be excused from sex education

The withdrawal of any student (primary or secondary) from sex education is permitted for any lessons, which teach over and above that which is included in the National Curriculum for Science. However, the procedures for doing so are different at primary and secondary and are set out below.

Primary School

Teaching of sex education at primary level is not compulsory under the new DfE guidelines.

In accordance with DfE guidance, where a primary school chooses to teach sex education over and above that which is included in the National Curriculum for science, any parent/carer will have the right to withdraw their child(ren) from these lessons. Head teachers/Principals will comply with the request to withdraw students.

Secondary School

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. The Trust, before granting any such request, will require the Headteacher/Principal of Academy to discuss the request with the parent and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the Trust will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns sixteen. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

The Headteacher/Principal of School will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

There is no right to withdraw from the national curriculum.

Working with external agencies

The Trust is aware that working with external partners will enhance the delivery of RSE and will support Academies to bring in specialist knowledge and implement different ways of engaging with young people.

Where Academies use external agencies, they will check the credentials of the visiting organisation and any visitors linked to the agency. Academies will also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with the planned programme and the published policy. Schools will work with external agencies to ensure that the content delivered is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils. Any materials that are used as part of the delivery must be approved by the Academy in advance of the session.

The Academy will ensure a member of staff accompanies all visitors. Visitors should not be alone with pupils/children unless the school has assured itself that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks).

The academy will also ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Trust's Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

BTCT recognises that at the heart of RSE, the focus is on keeping children safe, and acknowledges the significant role Academies have in preventative education.

In our Academies, we will allow children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.

In line with the document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), should a child inform staff or indicate that they or another young person is being abused or neglected, BTCT's safeguarding policy, and that of the specific Academy, will be followed.