NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL
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# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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| Status | **Statutory** |
| Responsible Governors' Committee | **Full Governing Body** |
| Date last approved by GB | **November 2025** |
| Responsible Person | **Co-Headteachers** |
| To Review Date | **November 2026** |
| Last Amended Date | **October 2022** |

The policy is designed to:

- help establish the high standards we require
- help colleagues maintain these standards
- ensure colleagues understand the process if the standards are not met.

A key principle is to prevent and correct rather than punish, to be achieved through support and guidance wherever reasonable in the circumstances. The guiding principle of the policy is to treat each other fairly and reasonably with respect and courtesy at all times, no matter what the circumstances.

***From September 2020 the Government has renamed Sex and Relationships Education – 'Relationships and Sex Education'. RSE is used in this policy as an abbreviation of the new name from September 2020. It is important to note that the new statutory framework also includes health education.***

# 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 students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

# 2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained secondary school (PRU) we must provide RSE to all students as per the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

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.

Under the Education Act (1993) and the Education Reform Act (1998) all schools are required to maintain a statement of policy regarding RSE and make it available to parents/carers on request. This policy complies with the DfES Guidance on Sex and Relationships Education (0116/2000) and the supplementary guidance Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century 2014.

# 3. Policy development

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

- Review – a working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- The draft policy was shared with parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to complete a set of questions that linked to the survey
- All school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- We will review what students want from their RSE over the course of the next academic year
- The final policy will be shared with governors and ratified

# 4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

# 5. Course content

The RSE curriculum is published on the school's website with more detailed content of the Relationships and Sex curriculum available on parental request. Our curriculum content will cover the required themes as set out in 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE and Health Education) Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers':

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

For more information on how Jigsaw PSHE complies and supports the Equality Act of 2010, see this article at https://www.jigsawpshe.com/jigsaw-articles-3-11/

Equality Act 2010 available at www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

### RSE curriculum for SEND students

Where possible all students will remain with their class for RSE lessons. Students who are SEND or identified as likely to need SEMH support with RSE will either receive the support within school (SEND department) or arrangements will be made for specific students to receive a differentiated version of the RSE program. The lead for Personal Development & the SENDCo and make relevant plans in consultation with parents/carers.

# 6. Sensitive or controversial topics

During RSE lessons (and at other times) controversial topics may arise. The judgement of individual teachers will decide as to whether the subjects are suitable for class discussion. Teachers will try to answer student questions honestly, sensitively and in such a way that takes the context into account. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of the teacher must be applied.

If a question is felt to be too explicit, the teacher will acknowledge it and deal with it outside the whole class setting.

New Heights has used a combination of the Jigsaw Charter and the PSHE Association guidance to develop its own distinct scheme of learning throughout the whole of our 7-16 provision.

Our curriculum is an effective scheme of learning for Personal Social Health Education aiming to prepare children for life, helping them to know and value who they truly are and understand how they relate to other people in this ever-changing world. Teachers should establish a set of ground rules so that young people are aware of parameters.

Students should never be asked to disclose their sexual orientations or personal information about themselves or others. Teachers and students will show respect for all genders, sexualities and different types of families.

Any concerns that arise about sexual abuse or any other safeguarding issues must be followed up under the schools safeguarding procedures. Where discussions about sexual behaviour arise from apparently unrelated topics, teachers will; give attention to relevant issues, again using professional judgement.

HIV/AIDS – informative discussions covering the transmission of the HIV virus may, by the very nature of the subject, include discussion of certain sexual acts and practices, teachers will deal sensitively and objectively with information of this kind, and will always avoid the development of bias and prejudice. Teachers will challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about HIV. Teachers should also be aware that they may be dealing with students who are HIV positive or who have close links with others who are.

# 7. Organisation and delivery

Relationships and Sex Education is taught in years 7-11 via 'Relationships for Learning' lessons and other tutor time periods. Many aspects of RSE are also addressed by different departments within the school.

All students within the school have equal access to Relationships and Sex Education. Topics are revisited in order to allow provision for previous absence and different levels of understanding, maturity and learning abilities.

Teachers and all those contributing to RSE will work within an agreed framework as is outlined in this policy.

We will work with external specialist organisations, consultants and healthcare professionals to ensure our curriculum reflects best practice.

# 8. Working with parents/carers' right to withdraw

Parental support is integral to the success of the RSE curriculum. While we have an educational and legal obligation to provide young people with RSE we respect the primary role of the parents/carers in educating their children about these matters. Our RSE program is detailed on the school website and parents/carers and carers are welcome to explore our curriculum further by requesting to view the teaching materials.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-science 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 2 of this policy and addressed to the Co-Headteachers.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Co-Headteachers, or someone they designate, will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

# 9. Confidentiality

Effective RSE should enable and encourage students to talk to a trusted adult if they are in a sexual relationship or contemplating being so. It is desirable but not always possible that that person should be their parent or carer. The law allows health professionals to see and in some circumstances to treat young people confidentially. Part of this process includes counselling and discussions about talking to parents/carers.

When a member of staff learns from an under sixteen-year-old that they are having, or are contemplating having sexual intercourse, they must refer the matter to the school's Designated Safeguarding lead, or if a sixteen-year-old student is contemplating having sexual intercourse with a student below the age of sixteen, who will lead on the most appropriate course of action in line with the schools' Safeguarding Policy.

# 10. The role of Health Professionals in the delivery of Relationships and Sex Education

The school will work with health professionals in the development and implementation of the school's Relationships and Sex programme. Any visitors used to help in the delivery of the RSE programme will be clear about the boundaries of their input and will be aware of the RSE curriculum, relevant school policies and their work will be planned and agreed in advance.

# 11. Monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of this policy will be monitored and evaluated through the normal processes of Departmental Review and Quality Assurance that apply to all areas of the curriculum. This policy will be reviewed by the Governing body regularly.

It is the responsibility of the Personal Development Co-ordinator to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of the Personal Development delivery, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Importantly, the overall impact of the RSE programme is evaluated regularly by the Heads of School.

# 12. Roles and responsibilities

## 12.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body will approve the RSE policy and hold the Co-Headteachers to account for its implementation.

## 12.2 The Co-Headteachers

The Co-Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

### 12.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modeling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-science 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 lessons are normally taught by form tutors during the allocated PD sessions.

### 12.4 Students

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