

Policy:

**Relationships and Sex Education
Policy**

Approval:

Board of Trustees

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Spring 2025

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Summer 2026



**CHELTENHAM
BOURNSIDE
SCHOOL**

Policies

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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

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, 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.

2. Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we're 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](#). (also referenced in the school's Funding Agreement).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At Cheltenham Bournside School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy Development and publication

This policy has been developed through a consultation process. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – the SLT Line manager and Head of E4L pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff – Key staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder – parents and any interested parties will be informed of the changes to the policy
4. Ratification – once amendments are made, the policy will be shared with governors and ratified

The agreed policy will be published on the school website. Paper copies will be available from the school on request.

An updated live view of the content being explored is updated termly on the website, which can be found [here](#)

The prospectus informs parent/carers of their right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education delivered as part of RSE.

4. Curriculum and delivery of RSE

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

Our RSE curriculum can be found [here](#), but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary. We have developed the curriculum, working with Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL) and the PSHE Association, taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

RSE is taught within the Education 4 Life Curriculum (E4L). Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

- The National Curriculum topic 'Reproduction' is covered in Year 7 science.
- The Year 8 and 9 E4L scheme of learning looks at healthy and unhealthy relationships and associated responsibilities and risks.
- The Year 8 E4L scheme of learning incorporates a visit from an external theatre company, in partnership with the Gloucestershire Children Safeguarding Board focusing on Child Sexual Exploitation and the risks of unhealthy relationships, including sexting.
- The Year 9 E4L scheme of learning looks at the different sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) including HIV/AIDs and at the impact on families of high-risk sexual behaviour. Sexuality is also covered in Year 9 E4L lessons, with an emphasis on mutual respect and tolerance. Contraception is covered together with the consequences and responsibilities of unplanned pregnancies.
- The Year 10/11 E4L scheme of learning checks knowledge on all aspects of sex education and considers myths and worries about sex. It looks at high risk behaviour in adolescence and at changing values over time. Students re-visit issues around relationships including domestic violence, sexting, pornography and abuse in teen relationships.
- In Year 10 and 11 science pupils learn about the science of *in vitro* fertilization, genetic inheritance and disorders. They also learn the science of hormones involved in the menstrual cycle and human reproduction, evaluating different contraceptives and treating infertility.
- All Year 12 students listen to talks delivered by health professionals on the topics of STIs, chlamydia and personal safety in relation to health.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see [Education 4 Life \(E4L\) - Cheltenham Bournside School](#)

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
- Safe and supported
- Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

5. Advice for Individual Students

Sex Education lessons make pupils aware of how to access confidential advice and medical treatment. The Gloucestershire Health Authority School Nurse offers a weekly 'drop-in' service on all health-related matters and provides confidential advice on request. Students are provided with contact information for sources of help and advice.

6. Resources

Resources will be checked and approved by the Head of Science, the Head of E4L and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) line manager of relationships and sex education to ensure that:

Any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress
- Contain no stereotyping, bias or prejudice
- Protect pupils from inappropriate materials.

7. The use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

- The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

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

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/non-science components of RSE (see section 9).

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/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.

Staff responsible leading the teaching for RSE are:

Louisa Rudge-Wills, Head of E4L Department

Sally Lees, Assistant Head/ DSL

Kevin Warren, Assistant Headteacher

Pupils

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

9. The right of parent/carers to withdraw their child from Sex Education

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/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 and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The request will be discussed with parents and the school will take appropriate action.

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

10. Training

Specific teaching staff are trained on the delivery of RSE and it is included as part of our continuing professional development.

The Head of E4L will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE, when required.

11. Links to other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti-bullying
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Equality and Diversity.

