

# BRIGHTON GIRLS

## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

September 2021

### **Policy statement:**

Definition of RSE – from *Sex Education Forum*

*Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.*

Brighton Girls takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible relationships and Sex education (RSE) to all its pupils as part of the school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum (Well-Being Programme) very seriously. At our school we want parents and pupils to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both age and development of pupils.

This teaching is not intended to replace advice or guidance which is ideally received at home, but to supplement and broaden knowledge and understanding.

This policy is drafted by the Deputy Head Pastoral in consultation with the Head, Head of Prep, Heads of House, the school nurse and SEND coordinator. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this policy content.

### **Aims of policy:**

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. This includes emphasis on good health, the value of self - esteem in making choices and judgements, the nature of healthy and consensual relationships, and knowledge about how the body works, all within a context of moral issues and values.

RSE will outline the importance of marriage and family life and the raising of children, as well as highlighting the role of marriage and other stable relationships as building blocks for community and society.

We want our students to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle and to care and respect their bodies and we provide them with the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

### **Provision:**

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We subscribe to the Department of Education guidance that will be mandatory in England from September 2020: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance*.

Relationships and Sex Education for all secondary schools. Taught PSHE has also been part of the Independent Schools Standards since 2014. We aim to provide a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum that not just fulfils, but exceeds externally set standards.

### Prep School - Including EYFS

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools and therefore, in the Prep School, the focus will be on Relationships Education. In PSHE lessons, and in the wider context of school life, the focus will be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults. The students will be taught about their health, including puberty. The curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. By the end of the Prep School the main themes covered will be:

Families and people who care for me

Caring friendships Respectful relationships

Online relationships

Being safe

Through Relationships Education (and RSE), the students will be taught the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In the Prep School this will be delivered by focusing on boundaries and **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY**, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online.

Senior School

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The Well-Being curriculum is spiral, so that topics can be re-visited in later years. Although the topics below are listed specifically, we treat Relationships and Sex Education as part of the wider PSHE/ Wellbeing curriculum. We support equal opportunities in education, seeing it as enabling and encouraging all our students to build self-esteem through discussion and activities in a safe environment. We are equipping them with decision-making skills irrespective of gender roles and stereotyping.

### **The main topics covered in RSE are:**

- Establishing healthy relationships.
- Puberty, menstruation and change.
- Consent and how to communicate this to others.
- Contraception.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Understanding our bodies
- Sexting
- Safer sex
- Sexual exploitation
- Sex and pornography
- Personal choices

As part of the PSHE programme, Relationships and Sex Education is taught by form tutors, Heads of House and the School Nurse mainly in form groups, using a range of activities with materials and support provided by health professionals.

The programme is developed and reviewed in consultation to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.

We ensure that RSE is age relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.

We ensure that staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues related to RSE including confidentiality, setting ground rules and establishing positive behaviour, handling controversial issues and responding to questions.

We ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with the school policy and guidance relating to relationships and sex education.

We ensure their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.

### **Terminology:**

Students will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang and everyday terms used in social situations will be discussed; this will be part of the discussion about what is and what isn't acceptable language to be used.

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Ground rules are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and staff will use strategies to enable students to feel comfortable to ask questions. If controversial questions are asked, the teacher will use professional judgement about how to answer them and students will be allowed to raise anonymous questions if preferred.

We recognise that because of the nature of the subject, sensitive and controversial issues are likely to arise. These may include, for example, abortion, emerging gender identity, sexuality and sexual abuse. These are dealt with within the framework of the aims of the school and of the Relationships and Sex Education policy as a whole. Any cause for concern will be dealt with in accordance with our pastoral systems and safeguarding arrangements.

### **Guest speakers:**

We sometimes use outside speakers to complement our teaching of this content, who are asked to work within the framework of the school's Relationship and Sex Education policy and adhere to the policy for Visiting Speakers. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons.

### **Withdrawal from RSE:**

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents to review this policy. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports the whole development of the child. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education. Any parents considering withdrawing their child from RSE should contact the Head / Pastoral Deputy Head to discuss their concerns. According to *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance* paragraph 41-43 pupils can opt into sex education from three terms before their 16th birthday.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We support the principle of equal opportunity in education, viewing it as enabling and encouraging our students to build self-esteem through various activities and equipping them with decision making skills regardless of gender roles, stereotyping, race, religion and disability. Our RSE and Health education is accessible to all students and care is taken to ensure that lessons are differentiated to ensure accessibility for SEND students. The school recognises that SEND students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues and our programme of study is designed with this in mind.

### **Review and evaluation:**

The educational and personal needs of our students develop in line with varying societal pressures and other changes. For this reason we regularly review our RSE curriculum. This policy will be reviewed annually.

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Updated September 2021

Policy to be reviewed: September 2022

Responsibility for review: Deputy Head Pastoral