



# **RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION POLICY**

Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at Silverwood School. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy is designed to meet the needs of all pupils, working through pre-formal, semi-formal and formal curricula. It is inclusive of students who function at early/preverbal levels of language and communication, through to those who express themselves verbally and in writing. The policy is designed to be child-centred and to make sure as far as is possible that pupils understand what is happening in their lives, why, and what options are available to them

**Approved by:**

**Standards Committee**

**Date: 12/03/2025**

**Last reviewed on:**

**March 2025 (ratified by FGB April 2025)**

**Next review by:**

**March 2026**

**Rationale:** Silverwood School recognises the entitlement of all pupils to receive Relationships and Sex Education, which is current, meaningful and relevant. Silverwood School promotes respect for diversity, promoting our pupils as global citizens. We encourage a sense of compassion and understanding of others, and a deep respect for human worth and dignity. We recognise and respect every member of the school community's ethnicity, cultural and religious values, and sexual orientation. The advance of modern technology brings with it issues of safeguarding and the school needs to address on-line safety in its various forms. This policy forms part of this commitment.

We are aware that parents need to know what their children will be taught at different ages. Our relationships and sex education programme form part of the wider PSHE education provision.

**Responsibility for Policy:** School Governing Body, Head Teacher and Subject Leaders for Health Education and PSHE. The Policy follows the guidance of the Secretary of State's 2000 guidance on RSE. Governors are mindful of their wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014) for ensuring that the school strives to do the best for all the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity religion or sexual identity. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 also underpins this policy and PSHRE provision within the school.

## **Pupils**

Where possible the pupils will be consulted on the quality and relevance of their RSE provision. Consultation with pupils informs us of what they want to know as well as knowing what they think of what is being taught. Pupils are involved in the development of resources wherever possible.

## **Parents and Families**

Parents are kept informed about the policy through the school's website, letters and parent's evenings. A programme of RSE training is provided for parents through the school's Family School support Workers that can also signpost parents for further support.

The school understands that parents are the most important educators of young people, and that many welcome the support that school can offer to supplement their home teaching. It is important that parents are prepared for any continued discussions or questions that their child raises based on the subject being delivered, and it is important that the school supports parents to be able to have high quality and informed discussions with their child.

## **CONTEXT**

Silverwood School caters for over 400 pupils with a range of needs including severe and profound, and complex cognitive and physical disabilities, aged 4-19. The school has a commitment to the development and delivery of a positive sexuality and relationship education.

Relationships and Sex Education forms an integral part of the school curriculum, and whilst sex education is seen as part of the wider programme of health education for pupils and students, it is important that

these sensitive issues are addressed if pupils are to gain skills to deal with life - its joys as well as its hazards. Dedicated time is given to this area of the curriculum under both PSHE and science. Sex education and relationship education is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and the school recognises that this education will need to evolve and adapt over time as the pupil population changes.

## **Relationships & Sex Education Curriculum**

This is a spiral curriculum in which themes and topics are revisited as students grow and develop. There are key learning modules within the programme: **The Physical Self; Emotions; Relationships; Sexual Expression; Public and Private Behaviours; Being healthy and staying safe**. It is based on 'Living your Life', the relationships and sex education personal development resource for people with learning difficulties and disabilities. The curriculum is taught as appropriate to pupil's age and ability. The school has consulted a number of experts in this field e.g. INSIGHTS Company, PSHRE association, Down syndrome association, UNESCO technical guidance, and the Autistic Society.

## **Assessment and Evaluation**

Staff base line pupils to assess their current knowledge and needs, the most appropriate strand of the RSE curriculum can then be considered and adapted for the pupil. Regular assessments evaluate progress of student as well as the effectiveness of teaching and resources. Progress is then monitored and captured on B squared and Evidence for Learning and reported to parents/carers and Governors.

## **Statement of Intent**

Relationships & Sex Education within the school is made relevant and accessible to all young people, being sensitive in the use of relationships and sex education resources, ensuring that they reflect cultural diversity. The School ensures that the relationships and sex education programmes are appropriate and relevant to all young people within the school. This entails discussion about sexuality and personal relationships within a variety of cultural contexts and the presentation of a broad spectrum of belief.

Young people are made aware of the range of moral and cultural frameworks within society. It is important that students are made aware of the diversity of moral opinion in society concerning sexual behaviour and personal relationships. Such moral frameworks are both secular and religious and include religion, the law and equal opportunities philosophies amongst others. They are also made aware of the range of cultural frameworks that exist in society supporting implementation of a programme of relationships and sex education;

- to a programme of relationships and sex education presented in a moral framework which recognises the diversity in society;
- to relationships and sex education which is sensitive to values, standards and personal responsibility.
- regulating sexual behaviour and relationships.

The School ensures that there is a gender dimension to all sexuality and relationship education work. It is important that gender issues in relationships and sexuality education are not excluded in an attempt to teach sexuality and relationship education within a religious or moral framework. An honest exploration of masculinity and femininity is a vital part of sex education and it is important that we do not assume that there is a religious consensus on issues concerning gender such as the role of women in society. Equal opportunities in the area of gender and ethnicity should not be mutually exclusive.

Young people are supported, not undermined, in their cultural identities.

It is important that staff do not make assumptions about the cultural and/or religious traditions of students. The first step in this process is for staff to identify the needs of young people. It is necessary to distinguish between young people's needs and the needs of those who speak on their behalf, acknowledging the gap which may exist between religious/community ideals and actual practices.

The School also takes steps to communicate with and involve parents and does not assume homogeneity within one community. When consulting with parents and communities, the school takes steps to ensure that these views are representative of all parts of the community. The School also endeavours to communicate clearly to parents the nature of the programme on relationships and sex education.

Young people are encouraged to develop and clarify their values and attitudes towards sex, sexuality and relationships and to respect and empathise with those of others. For young people to develop self-esteem and confidence it is vital that their cultural identities are supported and valued. Self-esteem is an important part of the process by which young people develop their own values and attitudes towards sex and sexuality. An approach to relationships and sex education which celebrates diversity in this way encourages young people to be aware of the traditions and beliefs of others, promoting mutual understanding and tolerance.

As a school we wish to counteract prejudice and to support the development of self-esteem and a sense of responsibility in every student, irrespective of sexual orientation. The topic of sexual orientation and same sex relationships should be treated with sensitivity and understanding, acknowledging that we live in a society which encompasses widely differing moral and religious views on the subject. We wish all students to live happy, safe and fulfilled lives whatever their sexual orientation and acknowledge that all students need support and guidance. The topic fits into our wider relationships programme, which considers all relationships – friends, family and partners.

### **Working with young people and their families**

The School is committed to working with parents and carers. The school has a detailed programme to ensure that the education does not occur haphazardly, though for it to be effective cooperation between home and school is essential. The young person receives a consistent approach, one that is sensitive to his or her needs as well as being appropriate to his or her level of understanding. It is important that staff and parents feel confident with the task in hand so that the young person feels secure. Parents are notified when particular aspects of relationships and sex education are to be taught. Education should not exacerbate confusion. Parents and staff are encouraged to discuss the issues openly to avoid confusion. On-going training for parents, through Family School Support Workers, aims to raise awareness that pupils of whatever age are sexual beings, developing physically, sexually and emotionally. We emphasise appropriate behaviour being taught from an early age.

Due regard is given to cultural and religious differences and parents are encouraged to discuss concerns. There will be opportunities for parents to discuss concerns and issues and learn more of their child's education in this area through face to face meetings.

Parent's are made aware of their statutory right to opt out of some aspects of the RSE curriculum, and are supported by the school to make an informed choice in so doing that allows their child to remain informed and safe.

### **Rights and principles for pupils and students.**

The Governors are of the opinion that in this all-age school, all pupils and students are entitled to an appropriate and balanced relationships and sex education programme. They seek to ensure that all pupils and students access the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.'

The Governors endorse the National and local guidance given in relation to relationships and sexuality and endorse the stated rights and principles stated below:

### **Entitlements**

More specifically, having regard for the uniqueness and special circumstances alluded to previously, all pupils and students have entitlements:

- to receive information about human development, with facts being presented in an objective, balanced manner, appropriate to the age, stage, level of maturity and learning needs of the individual;
- to knowledge about sexuality, within a structured framework of learning experiences designed to prevent unnecessary anxiety. This includes learning to communicate about sexuality and the development of appropriate language and vocabulary;
- to consideration of, and specific training for, building relationships and socio-sexual behaviour in order to promote greater social confidence; this would include realistic information on responsibilities and expectations of personal relationships;
- to information, advice and guidelines on inappropriate sexual behaviour (social, legally and culturally unacceptable), and all aspects of exploitation;
- to involvement of teachers, parents, governors and carers in the planning

### Implementation

The curriculum is designed to be divided into the Key stage of the child/pupil to ensure that the teaching reflects age appropriate milestones that the child/pupil may be experiencing e.g. puberty, age of consent etc

EYFS
KS1 and KS2
KS3 KS4 KS5 – Broken down further into separate content for each Year group

At each Key stage it is further sub-divided into a curriculum pathway so the content is delivered in an appropriate way for a pupil's cognitive stage.

Curriculum Pathway	Description	Stage of Learning
Pre-formal	Thematic Learning topics	Encountering Foundation
Semi-formal	Fundamental learning elements Increasing understanding of learning	Core Development
Formal	Deepening of application of learning Applying learning indifferent contexts	Enrichment Enhancement

### Opportunities are presented for pupils to:

- Experience taking and sharing responsibility.
- Feel positive about themselves and others.
- Reflect on their perceptions and experiences.
- Develop the understanding, language, communication skills and strategies required to exercise personal autonomy wherever possible.

- Carry out or take part in daily personal living routines.
- Make real decisions (with support where necessary, so that they can act upon them).
- Take part in group activities and make contributions.
- Develop and maintain positive relationships and interactions with others.
- Recognise and celebrate their achievements and successes.

**The Planning Framework is expected to be further adapted by class staff, to ensure it meets Individual pupils' needs by:**

- Breaking down the learning outcomes into smaller steps so that they form the basis of a lesson or series of lessons.
- Re-visiting, re-enforcing, consolidating and generalising previous learning, as well as introducing new concepts, knowledge and skills.
- Focusing on one aspect or a limited number of aspects within each stage.
- Re-visiting content through cross-curricular learning and/or through other activities in school.
- Offering both explicit and implicit learning opportunities and experiences which reflect pupils' increasing independence (where applicable).
- Incorporating the six stages into school assessment procedures, so that pupils' progress can be monitored both within lessons as well as over a period of time.
- Including different sensory experiences at the 'encountering' level tailored to individual pupils, in addition to responding to adult prompting.
- Providing opportunities both in and out of school to promote physical, social and emotional understanding as pupils move from the primary phase through to the secondary phase

**These topics subjects, whilst delivered in discrete PSHE/SRE sessions on the timetable, are also reinforced in cross-curricular lessons, assemblies, social times etc. in order to allow over learning and mastery through repetition.**