



Policy Name	RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION
Relevant To	Federation ☒ Bidwell Brook Only ☐ Ellen Tinkham Only ☐
Type of Policy	Model ☐ School ☒
Name of Policy Holder	Jamie Wright
Subject/Department	PSHE
Approved By	Full Governing Body ☐ CBT Governors ☐ T&L Governors ☒ SLT ☐
Version Date (if applicable)	n/a
Date of Last Review	Spring Term 2026
Date of Next Review	Spring Term 2027

This policy will be re-presented to the Governing Body, after consultation with staff, students and parent carers, every year.

1. Relationships and Sex Education Policy Aims

This policy sets out the content of the PSHE Curriculum, with particular reference to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). This Policy will:

- Define relationships and sex education (RSE).
- Set out the subject content, how it is taught and who is responsible for teaching it, reflecting the **amalgamated PSHE Framework** which now combines skills and knowledge.
- Describe how the subject is monitored and evaluated.
- Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused from sex education within RSE only (Secondary).
- Confirm the date by which the policy will be reviewed.

2. Definition of Relationships and Sex Education

PSHE is Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE). It encompasses the skills and knowledge that children and young people need to live a successful life. Relationships and Sex Education sits within PSHE, and includes specific content at different stages, prescribed by the Government.

Relationships and Sex Education teaches students what relationships are and the facts around sexual intercourse within the context of a mutually respectful relationship. Relationships and Sex Education includes content which teaches students about the law, including consent and what is illegal in the UK. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory in England from age 11 onwards. It involves teaching children about the scientific process of reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. It is important to note that we do not teach students how to have sex, but we teach them what sexual intercourse is and the facts around it. RSE does not promote early sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation.

Personal Development: Our Amalgamated Approach Following an extensive consultation with all community stakeholders (including staff, parents, carers, and young persons) the Federation has made the decision to combine the various branches of PSHE into a single, cohesive banner: **Personal Development**.

By moving away from complex educational jargon and separate "skills and knowledge" blocks, we have created a framework that uses student and family-accessible language. This ensures that every member of our community understands what is being taught and why. Under the "Personal Development" banner, RSE focuses on teaching students elements like: what a relationship is, what a friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. It also teaches them how to take care of their bodies, how to stay safe (including online), and how to identify and report abuse.

3. Personal Development Subject Content

Personal Development is a core subject. We use a single, integrated framework to ensure students receive an appropriate and balanced education. This framework is adapted across the Federation as follows:

- **EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage):** Learners follow the **PSED (Personal, Social, and Emotional Development)** statutory framework, which provides the essential foundation for their personal development journey.
- **Engagement Path:** For learners with complex or profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). Themes are explored through sensory interaction, focusing on the five areas of engagement (Realisation, Anticipation, Initiation, Exploration, and Persistence). This includes reacting to touch, engaging in hand washing, and indicating signs of rejection or acceptance.
- **Subject-Specific Pathways (KS1–KS4):** Content is organized into the following integrated themes and topics:
 - **Self-Awareness (SA):** Focusing on "Things we are good at" and "Kind and Unkind Behaviours."
 - **Self-Care, Support and Safety (SS):** Including personal hygiene, physical contact, safety online and in the community, and the fundamental concept of consent.
 - **Managing Feelings (MF):** Including identifying and managing feelings and supporting mental health.
 - **Healthy Living (HL):** Focusing on healthy lifestyles (physical activity/sleep), food and drink, and safety around medicines and household substances.
 - **Changing and Growing (CG):** Covering the physical changes of growing up and puberty.
 - **Relationships (RW):** Including healthy and happy relationships, different types of families, and specific Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).
 - **The World Around Us (WILI):** Including living in the wider world, rights and responsibilities, careers, public services, and managing finances.
- **Sixth Form (KS5):** Students continue to follow the thematic coverage of **Personal Development** in line with the rest of the school (Applying and Transferring levels). However, the delivery is highly bespoke, focusing on specific interventions based on **student wants and needs** alongside their **BTEC qualifications** to prepare them for adulthood.

The central goal is for our learners to have a voice and to acquire the integrated tools they need to achieve personal wellbeing and lifelong safeguarding.

4. Relationships and Sex Education Subject Content

Children and young people learn best within trusting relationships. We maintain a strong safeguarding culture where students understand that all staff are there to keep them safe and protect them from harm. Our curriculum is a "live" framework that is **constantly updated** to remain at the forefront of best practices. We ensure all content is strictly in line with:

- **Annual KCSiE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) updates**, ensuring we address emerging risks such as online harms, grooming, and peer-on-peer abuse.
- **Latest DfE Statutory Guidance**, providing the legal and age-appropriate foundation for all learners.
- **Community Interventions**, allowing us to be responsive to the specific needs of our local families and stakeholders identified through our ongoing consultation process.

Primary (Ages 4-11) / Key Stage 1 and 2

At the Primary level, children are taught about relationships through the **PSED** framework (EYFS) and the **Personal Development** framework. While there is no mandatory sex education content, there is

personalisation for children to help them learn about the biological aspects of puberty and the changing body (**CG - Changing and Growing**) where developmentally appropriate.

Relationships Education from Key Stage 1 onwards must cover:

- **Families:** Different types of family; key concepts including marriage, adoption, and fostering; and the roles of parents and carers.
- **Social Behaviours:** What it means to be kind or unkind; a range of strategies to resolve disagreements; and how to recognise and respond to bullying and hurtful behaviour.
- **Safety and Body Awareness:** Accurate language to name body parts; an understanding of 'private' in relation to your body; and identifying appropriate vs. inappropriate touch.
- **Emotions:** The difference between 'like' and romantic feelings of 'love'.

Secondary and Sixth Form (Ages 11-19) / Key Stage 3, 4 and 5

Relationships and Sex Education from Key Stage 3 onwards builds on these key concepts. While Sixth Form follows this thematic coverage, delivery is highly bespoke, focusing on **student wants and needs** alongside **BTEC qualifications**.

RSE from Key Stage 3 onwards must cover:

- **Healthy Relationships:** How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, **consent**, loyalty, trust, shared interests, sex, and friendship.
- **Health and Choices:** Understanding that all aspects of health can be affected by choices made in sex and relationships (physical, emotional, mental, sexual, and reproductive health).
- **Fact-Based Knowledge:** The facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility; the menopause; and the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage and stillbirth.
- **Agency and Pressure:** Strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure (including peer pressure); and the choice to delay sex or enjoy intimacy without sex.
- **Safeguarding:** The fundamental role of consent in a mutually respectful relationship; what to do when faced with abuse in a relationship; and how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- **Accessing Support:** How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

The Engagement Path

For learners with complex or profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD), these statutory elements are translated into sensory-based learning. This focuses on:

- **Consent and Voice:** Indicating signs of rejection or acceptance towards items, routines, or touch.
- **Self-Help:** Participating in personal care and hand washing routines.
- **Awareness:** Reacting to the feel of water or the movement of others to establish a sense of self and boundaries.

The central goal across all pathways is to provide a "spiral curriculum" where these explicit elements are revisited and deepened, ensuring every learner has the tools for personal safeguarding and wellbeing.

5. Aspects of Relationships and Sex Education which we define as 'Sex Education'

It is the Federation's responsibility to interpret what is deemed solely 'sex education' and this is explained clearly below. We have reached the decision about which aspects of the Personal Development framework to include in this list following extensive consultation with all community stakeholders, including staff, parents, and students.

By defining these specific elements, we ensure transparency for parent-carers regarding the Right to Withdraw (Secondary only). Within our integrated framework, we distinguish Relationships Education and Health Education (which are statutory for all) from Sex Education.

At the Learn to Live Federation, the Sex Education elements of RSE—delivered primarily through topic within our subject-specific pathways—are:

- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted.
- How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.

All other topics within the framework including CG (Changing and Growing) which covers puberty, and SS4 (Consent) are classified as Relationships or Health Education and are statutory requirements for all students to ensure their personal safety and wellbeing.

6. How the subject is taught and who is responsible for teaching it

Personal Development (PSHE) is taught and embedded throughout the curriculum at all Key Stages. From Key Stage Two, the expectation is that there is at least one discrete session each week as well as person-centred learning throughout the curriculum. We tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. We teach Personal Development sensitively, in an age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate way, with reference to the law. We strive to make all teaching and learning purposeful and interactive and provide fun, memorable learning opportunities. The class teacher is responsible for teaching the content of the Personal Development curricula and frameworks, supported by Teaching Assistants.

Under the framework, the thematic coverage is typically delivered as follows for Engagement learners because of the radiating focus of engagement with their own world:

- **Autumn Term: Self, Health and Wellbeing**
- **Spring Term: Relationship Education (RE) and/ or Relationship and Sex Education**
- **Summer Term: Living in the Wider World**

For Subject Specific, EYFS and KS5 learners the thematic coverage is typically delivered as follows because feedback suggests young people need more time to build trusting relationships with new staff for optimal engagement with the RSE curriculum:

- Autumn Term: Self, Health and Wellbeing
- Spring Term: Living in the Wider World
- Summer Term: Relationship Education (RE) and/ or Relationship and Sex Education

We adapt and react to the needs of our students. In some cases, our students may need tailored support around relationships and sex education. This will be developed in partnership with parent/carers, social workers and other professionals as appropriate. For students in the Sixth Form, this delivery is further enhanced by bespoke interventions based on student wants and needs alongside their BTEC qualifications.

Students receive intimate care in line with the Intimate Care Policy, in close consultation with parents/carers. A copy of this policy can be found on our websites www.bidwellbrook.devon.sch.uk / www.ellentinkham.devon.sch.uk This includes intimate care for students who start menstruating while at school. We take a personalised approach and your child or young person's teacher will work with you to ensure the right support is in place.

Students in the Federation of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods will take account of these differences and ensure that there is potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Teachers will use professional judgement and conversations with students and parents to arrange the class in small groups where appropriate, to ensure a positive learning environment where no-one is excluded.

7. How we manage difficult questions

Students may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond the planned Personal Development curriculum content. We recognize that our students have a voice and that providing factual, age-appropriate answers is a key part of personal safeguarding.

Students will have the opportunity to write, record, or use their individual communication systems to ask questions. These can be placed anonymously in a 'questions box' if they do not want to ask in front of others.

If a teacher or Teaching Assistant is asked a question which they do not feel is appropriate to answer in a group setting, or which they cannot answer immediately, they will use their professional judgement and the **Communication & Decision-Making Hierarchy** to:

- Let the class know the question is not appropriate to discuss in front of others at that time.
- Inform the parent/carer of the question which has been asked (if appropriate) to ensure a consistent message between home and school.
- Discuss the question with the PSHE Lead, a Diversity, Communication, and Advocacy Champion, or the Safeguarding Lead (if appropriate).
- Speak to the student privately with another adult present to provide a factual answer at a level they can understand.

Given the ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate or harmful sources of information. It is important that we work with families to ensure students can trust the Federation to give factual, impartial answers without bringing prejudices or negative values to the conversation. This collaborative approach ensures that no one is excluded from receiving the information they need to stay safe.

8. How the subject is monitored and evaluated

The **Personal Development (PSHE)** leads will monitor the teaching **and impact of the curriculum** by:

- Holding professional conversations with class teachers **and Diversity, Communication, and Advocacy Champions to ensure the curriculum remains responsive to student needs.**
- Discussing **Personal Development** with individual students and with the student council **to ensure everyone has a voice in their learning.**
- Monitoring Earwig **to review evidence of progress, particularly for learners on the Engagement Path and those working through the subject-specific pathways.**
- Observing and feeding back on discrete teaching sessions informally, where appropriate, **to ensure sensitive topics are delivered in a developmentally appropriate way.**
- **Reviewing the impact of bespoke interventions in the Sixth Form and PSED outcomes in EYFS to ensure a consistent thread of personal development across the Federation.**
- **Evaluating how effectively the curriculum reacts to KCSiE updates and community interventions to ensure lifelong safeguarding.**

9. Parent/Carer involvement

The Governing Body's parent/carer representative will remain the 'first port of call' for parent/carers who want to influence decision-making at each school or college in the Federation.

Parent/carers will be invited to comment on the **Personal Development** Policy (incorporating Relationships and Sex Education) in a consultative capacity, working towards participation. **This ensures our curriculum remains responsive to community interventions and local needs.** The table below explains:



Co-Production	We work jointly on decisions and put them into practice together.
Participation	We decide what should happen in the Federation together.
Consultation	The Federation asks parents/carers what they think about the framework and uses this information to help decide what to do.
Information	The Federation tells parents what is going to happen.

We anticipate parent/carers may become more involved as the Federation offers the opportunity for parent/carers to share their views on aspects of their child or young person's **Personal Development** education. These suggestions for parental involvement will be discussed as part of the development of this policy and reviewed annually:

- Reviewing the **Personal Development** policy.
- Reviewing the content of the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) guidance document **to ensure it aligns with KCSiE and DfE updates.**
- Reviewing the suggested session content and resources **from the framework** as presented by the PSHE Lead and class teachers, prior to the start of the RSE content.
- **Providing feedback on the student and family-accessible language used within the new themes.**

10. Student involvement

The **Personal Development** leads will discuss the Relationships and Sex Education resources with the student council (KS3–KS4) and **Diversity, Communication, and Advocacy Champions** annually, before the content has been taught and after the content has been taught. **This ensures that everyone has a voice and that resources are adapted based on student feedback and current community interventions.**

Class teachers will work with individual students in their class to determine the most appropriate teaching methods and resources, **utilising the Communication & Decision-Making Hierarchy to ensure all learners can express their preferences.** Where appropriate, there will be an evaluation for students when they have finished the course (to be administered by the class teacher) which will rate how confident they feel about each aspect of the **curriculum.** **For students on the Engagement Path, this involvement is captured through their initiation and exploration of sensory resources, with evidence recorded on Earwig.**

11. 'Right to Withdraw' at Primary

There is no 'right to withdraw' from relationships education for primary-aged students. This is because the content taught within the **framework** at this level does not include any elements defined as Sex Education. All topics covered, including **CG (Changing and Growing)**, are classified as statutory Relationships or Health Education to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our younger learners.

12. 'Right to Withdraw' at Secondary

Any 'right to withdraw' from Sex Education must be negotiated with parents/carers (for students under 16) or with the student (if they have capacity to make that decision) following consultation. It is the Federation's responsibility to interpret what is deemed solely 'sex education', and these specific elements are explicitly listed in **Section 5** of this policy.

We encourage parents and carers to engage with the school before making this decision. Our goal is to provide a safe, neutral environment where students can learn essential facts for their long-term safeguarding. If you decide you do not wish your student to participate in the specific Sex Education elements, you can contact the class teacher or the Head of School to arrange for them to be withdrawn from those specific sessions.

Please note that for students in the **Sixth Form**, where learning is highly bespoke and based on **individual wants and needs**, any withdrawal will be managed through the same consultative process to ensure the student's voice and best interests remain central to their transition into adulthood.

13. Version History of Policy

Date	Version	Author	Approved by
March 2026	Rewritten to reflect DfE backed curriculum changes	Federation PSHE Leads	
March 2025	Updated to reflect KCSiE changes	Federation PSHE Leads	
March 2024	Added link to locate the Intimate Care Policy	Federation PSHE Leads	
January 2023	1.4 - Reviewed whole document against pre-existing policy and incorporated into template. Updated: - Abuse - Consent - Framework titles	Federation PSHE Leads	
January 2022	1.3 - Reviewed whole document against pre-existing policy and incorporated into template.	Federation PSHE Leads	
November 2021	1.2 – added specific info re: RSE and right to withdraw following parent and governor discussions	Melanie Hopton PSHE Lead	
April 2021	1.1 – Reviewed with N Burroughs, discussed peer-on-peer abuse	Melanie Hopton PSHE Lead	
February 2021	1.0 created using <u>Introduction to requirements - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u>	Melanie Hopton PSHE Lead	