



BOA Digital Technologies Academy

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Aims

By the time they leave the academy our students will be able to make informed decisions with regard to their own health (including sexual health) and personal well-being whilst having regard for the wellbeing and rights of others.

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

Our academy is committed to relationships and sex education which:

- Is an identifiable part of our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, and which has planned, timetabled lessons across Key Stage 3
- Is taught by staff regularly trained in RSE and PSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme where appropriate)
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and about how they can contribute at home
- Delivers lessons where students feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion
- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of students, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online
- Gives a positive view of human sexuality, with honest and medically accurate information, so that students can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity
- Gives students opportunities to reflect on values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex, and nurtures respect for different views
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as health and advice services, including reliable information online
- Fosters gender equality and LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, questioning) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in PHSE/RSE lessons and in every-day school life
- Meets the needs of all students with their diverse experiences - including those with special educational needs and disabilities
- Seeks students' views about RSE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by BOA and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy we must provide RSE to all students as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we are 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](#).

At BOA we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy development

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

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

Definition

Relationship and sex education (RSE) is defined as:

A programme designed to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

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.

Curriculum

Our curriculum in the first year is set out as per Appendix 2 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Delivery of RSE

Organisation

RSE and Health education are coordinated by the Assistant Principal who is responsible for the overall planning, implementation and review of the programme.

RSE and Health education will be conducted in accordance with legislation and DfE statutory guidance and will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

The majority of the programme will be delivered by tutors through PSHE and be supported by the delivery of the national curriculum in citizenship, science and physical education. Students can be taught in mixed ability, mixed gender or single sex groupings. There will be additional expert input from external agencies. RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in Citizenship.

Delivery

Students also receive sex education sessions delivered by staff trained by a trained health professional.

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

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

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body (Board of Trustees)

The Board of Trustees will approve the RSE policy and hold the principal to account for its implementation.

The Principal

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

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way

- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE

- Monitoring progress

- Responding to the needs of individual students

- Responding appropriately to students 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 Principal.

Oversight of RSE: Assistant Principal – Deb Hart

RSE Lead –

Students

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

Parents' right to withdraw

We understand that the teaching of some aspects of the programme may be of concern to parents/carers.

We will ensure that no teachers express their personal views or beliefs when delivering the programme.

Parents/carers will be regularly consulted on the content of the programme, through meetings or letters, and the programme will therefore be planned in conjunction with parents/carers.

We respect the legal right of parents/carers to withdraw their child from all or part of the RSE programme, except for those statutory parts included in the national curriculum for citizenship, P.E. and Science2. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from RSE lessons, they should put in writing which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in and send this to the academy addressed to the Assistant Principal - Pastoral.

Before granting any such request the Assistant Principal will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. We will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

During this discussion the Assistant Principal will discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

This process is the same for students with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Assistant Principal may want to take a student's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. Additional support may be offered to ensure the best learning outcomes where appropriate.

The academy always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard and will provide appropriate sources of information for parents who wish to withdraw their children. If a parent withdraws their child from topics that are not included in the statutory National Curriculum, after meeting with the academy to discuss their concerns, then the academy will make alternative arrangements for the student.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record.

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

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Assistant Principal will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Equal opportunities

We understand and abide by The Equality Act 2010, and fully respect the rights of students and staff members.

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Under the provisions of the Equality Act, we will not unlawfully discriminate against students because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). We will also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

We are dedicated to delivering the relationship and sex education (RSE) and health education programme with sensitivity and respect, avoiding any derogatory or prejudicial terms which may cause offence.

We will be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. We will model positive behaviours. Our pastoral and behaviour policies support all students.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up. Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously. We will foster an understanding for all students of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment. This will help to ensure that students treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults.

Any occurrence of incidents contravening the Equality Act 2010 should be reported to a member of academy staff, who will then follow the appropriate Behaviour Policy when the student is on academy premises.

These incidents will be dealt with following the process in our Anti-Bullying Policy or the peer-on-peer abuse section of the Safeguarding Policy. The principal will decide whether it is appropriate to notify the police or an anti-social behaviour coordinator in their LA of the action taken against a student.

Assessment

Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for these subjects, we will have the same high expectations of the quality of students' work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas. A strong curriculum will build on the knowledge students have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on student progress.

Lessons will be planned to ensure that students of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. Teaching will be assessed and assessments will be used to identify where students need extra support or intervention.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Assistant Principal (Pastoral) through monitoring arrangements including planning scrutiny, learning walks and lesson observations.

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Deb Hart annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Appendix 1: Letter to Parents/Carers

BOA Digital Technologies Academy
47 Barrack Street,
Birmingham,
B7 4EU

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will be aware that, as a part of your child's educational experience at BOA Digital Technologies Academy, we aim to promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive taught programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education that gives young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive and fulfilled lives, both now and in the future. I am writing to let you know that, throughout the year, your child's tutor group will be taking part in lessons which will focus on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

Relationship Education Lessons will include students learning about: Healthy and unhealthy relationships, different types of families, managing online relationships, menstruation and puberty, self-esteem and romance, consent, contraception, managing conflict, sexual orientation and gender identity, marriage and divorce, sexually transmitted infections, sharing explicit images ('sexting'), the effects of pornography on relationship expectations, body image and gender stereotyping, parenting skills, relationship myths, relationship/domestic abuse, forced marriage.

This is part of our school's PSHE education programme which is taught throughout the school in every year group and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the staff and governing body. For more detail about our PSHE curriculum offer, please visit the academy's website, where you can access curriculum overviews by year group and our Relationships and Sex Education policy. All teaching in PSHE will take place in a safe learning environment and be underpinned by our school ethos and values. A variety of opportunities will be provided for students to ask questions in order to prepare them for relationships in the modern world.

As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents. There will be opportunities throughout the year to find out more about what your child will learn, view the materials and resources being used in lessons and discover how you can best support your child to discuss these topics at home. You will also receive feedback on your child's engagement with and understanding of the programme.

BOA Digital respects the legal right of parents/carers to withdraw their child from all or part of the RSE programme, except for those statutory parts included in the national curriculum for citizenship, P.E. and science. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from RSE lessons, they should put in writing which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in and send this to the academy addressed to the Assistant Principal (Pastoral).

Before granting any such request the Assistant Principal will discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. We will document this process to ensure a record is kept. If you have

any concerns or queries about your child's participation in these lessons, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or your child's class teacher to discuss these.

Yours faithfully,

Principal