



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Next review date:	October 2026		
Responsible:	S. Whittaker		
Statutory Policy:	Yes		
Date	Version	Reason for change	Review
20/3/26	1.0	Statutory change	Annually

To be read alongside all relevant BOA Digital Technologies Academy policies and procedures including Behaviour Handbook, Anti-bullying Policy and E-Safety Policy

1. Aims

By the time students leave the academy, students will be able to make informed, responsible, and respectful decisions about their health (including sexual health), relationships, personal safety, and well-being.

The aims of RSHE at BOA Digital Technologies Academy are to:

- Provide a safe framework in which sensitive, age-appropriate discussions can take place.
- Equip students to recognise and challenge misogyny, discrimination, and all forms of violence against women and girls.
- Prepare students for puberty and sexual development, understanding biological sex and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help students develop self-respect, confidence, empathy, and resilience.
- Create a positive and inclusive culture around relationships, sexuality, identity, and consent.
- Teach students accurate, evidence-based vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Promote mental health awareness, emotional literacy, and strategies for managing wellbeing.
- Empower students to navigate online spaces safely and critically.

2. Commitment and Principles

Our RSHE provision:

- Is taught through our **Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE)** curriculum during timetabled lessons for 1 hour per fortnight for both KS3 and 4, the Academy pastoral programme, assemblies and national curriculum for Science.
- Is taught by staff who receive training and support through **continued professional development (CPD)** in handling sensitive topics. [Curriculum is enhanced through external visitors 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.
- The academy ensures that all external resources, visitors and third-party providers are appropriately vetted to confirm accuracy, impartiality and alignment with statutory guidance. All external providers and materials are subject to rigorous quality assurance checks, including safeguarding compliance, impartiality, accuracy, and alignment with statutory RSHE guidance.
- The PSHE programme (the academy's timetabled PSHE curriculum) has been mapped directly against the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) (secondary) and Health Education (primary and secondary).

- All content is reviewed to ensure it meets current legal requirements and supports delivery of the statutory curriculum. Where external materials are used, these are quality-assured by the PSHE lead prior to delivery.
- Encourages student participation through inclusive, safe teaching approaches that develop critical thinking and decision-making skills.
- Promotes respect, equality, boundaries, and healthy relationships, both in person and online.
- Recognises the importance of biological sex and enables understanding of gender identity, while promoting respect for all individuals.
- It is based on reliable sources of information, including 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.
- Challenges all forms of discrimination in PSHE/RSE lessons and in every-day school life and pupils learn the 9 protected characteristics.
- Builds understanding of how harmful stereotypes, sexism, misogyny, and gender-based violence impact individuals and society.
- Provides information about where and how to access help, advice, and support services (including mental and sexual health).
- Reflects the diverse experiences and needs of all students, including those with SEND and disabilities.
- Is regularly reviewed and informed by student feedback.

3. Statutory Requirements

The academy also has due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 Equality Act 2010), ensuring elimination of discrimination, advancement of equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups.

BOA delivers Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in line with statutory requirements and current Department for Education (DfE) guidance. The DfE published revised RSHE statutory guidance that comes into effect on the **1st of September 2026**. As a secondary academy, BOA must provide Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) to all students under:

- Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017

- Education Act 1996 (Section 403)
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- DfE Statutory Guidance for RSHE (2025)

At BOA, we teach RSHE in accordance with these legal duties and this policy. This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by BOA and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

4. 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

5. Definition

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) help students develop healthy, safe, and respectful relationships of all kinds. It includes:

- Understanding what healthy, consensual, and respectful relationships look like.
- Recognising and challenging coercion, abuse, misogyny, and online harms.
- Learning about biological sex, reproduction, contraception, and sexual health.
- Understanding the importance of boundaries, consent, and equality.
- Developing awareness of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Navigating online environments safely and critically.
- Respecting difference, including gender identity, sexual orientation, faith, and family structures.

RSHE is **not the promotion of sexual activity**.

6. Curriculum

The curriculum is carefully sequenced to build knowledge over time and includes opportunities for students to apply learning in real-life contexts, supporting long-term retention and informed decision-making.

Our RSHE curriculum is age-appropriate, inclusive, and responsive to student needs. We follow a spiralled curriculum provided by Life Lessons Education LT that builds on students knowledge year on year. Life Lessons produces resources for schools to help them create an inclusive school environment where pupils feel they are safe. It aims to help learners know how to identify and maintain healthy relationships with family, friends, colleagues and (when they are ready) romantic partners and developing skills to keep themselves safe and healthy. Resources are designed to be flexible, so these will be adapted to meet the needs of our students and their communities where appropriate by the PSHE co-ordinator.

Key Themes Include:

- **Families and Relationships:** respect, diversity, and boundaries.
- **Online Safety:** critical awareness of digital behaviours, sexting, pornography, image-sharing, and AI-generated content.
- **Misogyny & Violence Prevention:** recognising and challenging sexist attitudes, harassment, coercive control, and violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- **Personal Safety:** understanding consent, boundaries, and safety in public and online spaces.
- **Physical Health & Mental Wellbeing:** self-esteem, resilience, coping strategies, and sources of support.
- **Biological Sex and Gender Identity:** understanding reproductive biology alongside inclusive education about gender identity and respectful discussion of differing views.
- **Healthy Intimate Relationships:** contraception, sexual health, readiness for sex, and resisting pressure.

If students raise questions beyond the scope of the curriculum, teachers will respond appropriately, ensuring answers are fact-based, respectful, and developmentally suitable.

The curriculum is reviewed annually in response to safeguarding trends, student voice, national guidance, and emerging risks.

7. Delivery of RSHE

Teaching reflects emerging safeguarding risks, including online harms, exploitation, AI-generated content, and digital behaviours, ensuring students are prepared for modern contexts.

RSHE is coordinated by the **Head of Creative [Extended leadership]** taught through:

- The PSHE curriculum
- Pastoral Programme
- Assemblies
- Science
- Specialist sessions from trained staff and approved external professionals where appropriate.

All external providers and materials are subject to rigorous quality assurance checks, including safeguarding compliance, impartiality, accuracy, and alignment with statutory RSHE guidance.

Lessons may be taught in mixed or single gender groups, depending on the topic and student needs.

When external visitors contribute to RSHE, the academy ensures that:

- The session purpose and content are agreed in advance and align with the RSHE curriculum
- Materials are reviewed for suitability, accuracy, inclusivity and age-appropriateness
- Visitors understand the academy's safeguarding expectations and professional boundaries
- A member of BOA staff is present and retains responsibility for delivery and classroom management
- Sessions are evaluated afterwards (student feedback and staff review) to inform future use.
- Accuracy and alignment with the statutory framework.
- Objectivity and lack of political or ideological bias.
- Sensitivity and inclusivity.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

- Approves and reviews the RSHE policy annually.
- Ensures statutory compliance.

The Principal

- Ensures RSHE is taught consistently and effectively.
- Oversees teacher training and curriculum implementation.
- Manages parental requests for withdrawal.

The Head of Creative

- Leads, coordinates, and monitors RSHE delivery.

- Keeps accurate records of parental communications and withdrawal decisions.
- Ensures all staff are appropriately trained.

Staff

- Deliver RSHE sensitively and inclusively.
- Model respectful and appropriate behaviour.
- Respond appropriately to student needs and safeguarding concerns.

Students

- Are expected to participate respectfully.
- Should feel able to express opinions in a safe, non-judgmental space.

9. Parents' Right to Withdraw

BOA is committed to transparency with parents and carers. Parents/carers can view RSHE curriculum overviews and, on request, the resources used to teach RSHE (including any materials used by external visitors). Where copyrighted third-party materials cannot be shared electronically, the academy will provide an opportunity to view these on site within a reasonable timeframe. The academy will communicate in advance when sex education content is planned so that parents/carers understand what will be taught and when.

All external providers and materials are subject to rigorous quality assurance checks, including safeguarding compliance, impartiality, accuracy, and alignment with statutory RSHE guidance.

Parents may withdraw their child from **sex education** components (not relationships or health education), except statutory elements within Science.

Requests must be made **in writing** to the **Principal**.

- The Principal will discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate, the student.
- This discussion and decision will be **accurately recorded**.
- Students withdrawn will be provided with appropriate alternative learning.
- After three terms before their 16th birthday, a student may choose to receive sex education directly.

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

10. Teacher Training

All staff delivering RSHE receive **regular, high-quality training** covering:

- Age-appropriate content delivery including 'Best practice' in RSHE CPD delivered, by a trained professional from life lessons PSHE.
- Managing sensitive discussions and safeguarding disclosures.
- Responding to questions about gender identity, sexuality, and biological sex appropriately.
- Identifying and addressing misogynistic or discriminatory language and behaviour.
- Supporting student mental health and signposting help.

Lesson materials include detailed teacher notes and background information and step-by-step guidance on how to deliver sensitive topics. Teachers have access to CPD and training materials, for example via the Life lessons online platform. Staff may also receive key training via live or recorded training sessions.

11. Safe learning environment, questions and safeguarding disclosures

RSHE plays a key safeguarding role by helping students recognise abuse, exploitation, unhealthy relationships, and online risks, and how to seek help. Teaching supports early identification of risk and promotes protective behaviours.

Teachers establish clear ground rules including respectful listening, use of appropriate language, confidentiality limits, and the right to pass.

RSHE is taught within an agreed safe learning framework. At the start of RSHE units, teachers establish clear ground rules including respectful listening, use of appropriate language, confidentiality limits, and the right to pass.

Students are encouraged to ask questions and may do so anonymously where appropriate (for example, through a question box or online form). Staff will respond in a way that is factual, age-appropriate and sensitive, and will distinguish between fact, the law, and opinion. If a question is not appropriate to answer in a whole-class setting, staff may respond privately, signpost to support, or address the issue in a planned way at a later time.

Staff do not promise confidentiality. If a student makes a disclosure or raises a concern that indicates they or another child may be at risk of harm, the member of staff will follow the academy's safeguarding procedures and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. Any concerns about sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation or online sexual harm will be treated as safeguarding matters and managed in line with the Safeguarding and Behaviour policies.

12. Equality, Inclusion and Accessibility

BOA Digital Technologies Academy is committed to ensuring that RSHE is inclusive, accessible and relevant to all students. RSHE is delivered in a way that respects and values difference and supports pupils to develop empathy, respect and understanding of others.

The academy has due regard to its duties under the **Equality Act 2010** and does not discriminate against any pupil because of a protected characteristic. RSHE teaching and resources are selected and adapted to ensure that pupils learn about respectful relationships and protected characteristics, including (where age-appropriate) disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and different family structures.

BOA recognises that pupils' starting points, experiences and needs vary. Teachers will use a range of approaches and adapt materials to support all learners, including pupils with SEND and pupils with additional vulnerability. This may include adjusted language, additional scaffolding, smaller group work, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, and differentiated tasks/resources. The SENDCo will support staff to ensure appropriate adaptations are in place.

RSHE is taught in a way that is sensitive to pupils' backgrounds, culture and faith, while remaining consistent with the academy's values, safeguarding responsibilities and statutory requirements. Teaching promotes mutual respect and does not encourage discrimination, prejudice, harassment or stereotyping. Staff will actively challenge discriminatory language and harmful attitudes, including sexism, racism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and violence. All incidents are managed through the academy's **Behaviour**, **Anti-Bullying**, and **Safeguarding** policies. Sexual violence and harassment are never tolerated and will be dealt with promptly and seriously.

The academy will continue to review RSHE resources to ensure they remain accurate, age-appropriate and inclusive, and to reflect emerging risks (including online harms) and evolving statutory expectations.

13. Assessment and Monitoring

The academy evaluates RSHE not only through lesson monitoring, but through wider indicators of impact. This includes student voice on safety and confidence to seek help, analysis of safeguarding themes and behaviour trends (including sexual harassment and online incidents), attendance/engagement patterns where relevant, and staff feedback on training needs. Findings are used to refine sequencing, resources and staff development.

While there is no formal examination in RSHE, the academy will:

- Maintain **high expectations** for engagement and quality of learning.
- Assess understanding through reflection, discussion, and feedback.
- Monitor delivery through lesson observations, planning reviews, and student voice.

This policy is reviewed **annually** and approved by the **Academy Governing Body**

14. Equal opportunities

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

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.

Appendix 1: Sex education in Science

Within the science curriculum, pupils are taught about reproduction as part of the statutory National Curriculum. This includes reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), covering the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, the menstrual cycle (without detailed hormonal content at KS3), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, and the impact of maternal lifestyle on the developing foetus via the placenta. Pupils also study reproduction in plants, including flower structure, pollination (wind and insect), fertilisation, seed and fruit formation, and seed dispersal. At GCSE level, students build on this knowledge by learning about the hormones involved in human reproduction, including the menstrual cycle, puberty, and the roles of oestrogen, progesterone, testosterone, follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) and luteinising hormone (LH). They also learn about different methods of contraception, including hormonal and non-hormonal approaches, and evaluate their effectiveness. In addition, students are taught about infertility treatments, including the use of fertility drugs and in vitro fertilisation (IVF), along with consideration of the potential emotional, physical and medical implications. This content is typically delivered in Year 10 as part of the GCSE science programme, usually during the spring term. All teaching is delivered in an age-appropriate and scientifically accurate manner, in line with statutory guidance. There is no right for parental withdrawal from sex education within science lessons.

Appendix 2: PSHE curriculum content

		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7	PSHE	Transitions Transition to secondary school	Identity and difference Diversity Identifying and challenging bullying	Body awareness Body Image Puberty Periods	Independence Staying safe First Aid Healthy choices	Independence Friendships Staying safe online	Aspirations and money Goals and ambitions
	Science	Biology basics Inc. reproduction		Human reproduction Inc. puberty		Growth and development Inc. pregnancy	
	SMSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti bullying week (November) Life talk-current affairs Black History Month (October) World Mental Health Day (10th October) World Kindness Day (November) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health week (February) Safer Internet Day (February) Life talk-current affairs International Women's Day (March) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture day Life talk-current affairs Careers Fayre 	
Year 8	PSHE	Relationships Family and healthy relationships inc. online	Relationships Intimate relationships inc. sexting, boundaries and consent and contraception	Well being Online well being Media influence	Well being Physical and mental well being Alcohol and drug misuse	Body awareness Sexuality Privacy and consent FGM and forced marriage	Aspirations and money Money and budgets
	Science	Biology basics Inc. reproduction		Human reproduction Inc. puberty		Growth and development Inc. pregnancy	
	SMSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti bullying week (November) Life talk-current affairs Black History Month (October) World Mental Health Day (10th October) World Kindness Day (November) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health week (February) Safer Internet Day (February) spiritual and social Life talk-current affairs International Women's Day (March) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture day Life talk-current affairs Careers Fayre 	
Year 9	PSHE	Transitions Study skills and managing stress Mental health and self harm	Community Protected characteristics Discrimination Racism and Anti Racism Abusive relationships	Body Awareness Sleep and mood Body image Puberty and hormones	Body awareness Periods Readiness for sex and consent Sexual Health and STI's	Independence Peer pressure Online influence	Aspirations and money Pathways to your future and decision making
		Identity Exploitation Knife crime Allyship				Well being Safety and first aid Health and healthy choices	
	Science	Biology basics Inc. reproduction		Human reproduction Inc. puberty		Growth and development Inc. pregnancy	
	SMSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti bullying week (November) Life talk-current affairs Black History Month (October) World Mental Health Day (10th October) World Kindness Day (November) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health wee (February) Safer Internet Day (February) spiritual and social Life talk-current affairs International Women's Day (March) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture day-cultural and moral Life talk-current affairs Careers Fayre 	

Year 10	PSHE	Relationships Stable, committed relationships Becoming a parent	Relationships Healthy and unhealthy relationships Sexual choices and pregnancy inc. abortion	Well being Knowing your rights Human rights Media influence	Well being Mental health Pressures of modern life Alcohol and drug misuse	Independence Safety and first aid Healthy choices and health prevention Cosmetic surgery, vaccines and organ and blood donation	Aspirations and money The future Finding work Money and budgeting
	Science			Reproduction inc. contraception			
	SMSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti bullying week (November) • Life talk-current affairs • Black History Month (October) • World Mental Health Day (10th October) • World Kindness Day (November) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health week (February) • Safer Internet Day (February) • spiritual and social Life talk-current affairs • International Women's Day (March) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture day-cultural and moral • Life talk-current affairs • Careers Fayre 	
Year 11	PSHE	Transitions Responsibility	Community Diversity Bereavement and Grieving Gender stereotypes	Body awareness Mindfulness Body image Parenthood and fertility	Body awareness Readiness for sex Sexual health and STI's	Well being Addiction and gambling	Aspirations and money Rights and responsibilities at work Goals and dreams
	Science			Reproduction inc. contraception			
	SMSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti bullying week (November) • Life talk-current affairs • Black History Month (October) • World Mental Health Day (10th October) • World Kindness Day (November) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health week (February) • Safer Internet Day (February) • spiritual and social Life talk-current affairs • International Women's Day (March) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture day-cultural and moral • Life talk-current affairs • Careers Fayre 	
Year 12	PSHE	Relationships Values Healthy family functioning Changing relationships	Relationships Improving and ending relationships Consent and unhealthy relationships	Well being Knowing your rights Online well being Responsible use of media	Well being Media influence Mental health and well being Drug misuse	Independence Safety and first aid Health and making healthy choices Influence and volunteering	Aspirations and money Making the most of the money we have Starting a business and global economy
	Science						
	SMSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti bullying week (November) • Life talk-current affairs • Black History Month (October) • World Mental Health Day (10th October) • World Kindness Day (November) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health week (February) • Safer Internet Day (February) • spiritual and social Life talk-current affairs • International Women's Day (March) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture day-cultural and moral • Life talk-current affairs • Careers Fayre 	
Year 13	PSHE	Transitions Moving out/university	Community Diversity and privilege Identity and power	Body Awareness Parenthood and fertility	Well being The power of the internet		

		Identity Inclusion and discrimination	Body awareness Body and emotions Mindfulness Sexual Health inc. condoms and stealthing	Readiness for sex and consent	Aspirations and money Work and budgets Applications and interviews	
	Science					
	SMSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti bullying week (November) • Life talk-current affairs • Black History Month (October) • World Mental Health Day (10th October) • World Kindness Day (November) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health week (February) • Safer Internet Day (February) • spiritual and social Life talk-current affairs • International Women's Day (March) 		

Transitions
Relationships
Identity
Community
Body awareness
Independence
Well being
Aspirations and Money
Sex ed. In Science-compulsory
SMSC [spiritual, social, moral and cultural]

Topics in more detail

Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• about different types of committed, stable relationships• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.• about marriage and long-term relationships including legal rights• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children• how to seek help and support others in unsafe relationships
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (including online)• how stereotypes are damaging and the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality• how to show respect towards others and show tolerance of other people's beliefs.• about types of bullying, the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.• criminal behaviour within relationships including violence and coercive control.• sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships• how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online• about online risks, including the sharing of materials• what to do and where to get support for any issues• the impact of viewing harmful content specifically• sexually explicit material and its impact on future relationships• criminal behaviour related to indecent images• how information is collected, shared and used online

<p>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy intimate relationships, • that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships • the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and menopause • that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure • that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available. • the facts and choices around pregnancy including miscarriage, adoption and abortion • how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex and the facts about testing • how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour • how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
<p>The law</p>	<p>Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marriage • consent, including the age of consent • violence against women and girls • online behaviours including image and information sharing and pornography • abortion • sexuality and gender identity
<p>Mental wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary • that happiness is linked to being connected to others • how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns • common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression) • how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health • the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
<p>Internet safety and harms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image) • how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt• how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online• how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
Physical health and fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress• the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health• about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.
Healthy eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

Appendix 3: Withdrawal letter

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

Dear Parents and Carers,

At BOA Digital Technologies Academy, we are committed to supporting every student's personal development, wellbeing and readiness for adult life. As part of this commitment, all students receive a planned and high-quality programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. This includes **statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)**, as required by DfE statutory guidance (revised July 2025; statutory from Sept 2026)".

I am writing to inform you that your child will take part in RSHE lessons throughout the academic year. These lessons equip students with the knowledge, skills and values they need to build healthy relationships, keep themselves safe (on- and offline), and make informed choices.

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.

Parents/carers have the legal right to **request** to withdraw their child from some or all aspects of *sex education* that fall outside the statutory content of the Science, P.E. and Citizenship curriculum. There is **no right to withdraw** from Relationships Education or Health Education.

If you wish to request withdrawal, please write to the Principal, stating which elements you wish your child to be withdrawn from.

Before responding to any request, the Principal will meet with you—and, where appropriate, with your child—to ensure that:

- Your views are understood,
- The purpose and content of the curriculum are clear,
- Your child's wellbeing and educational needs are fully considered.

A written record of the discussion and outcome will be 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,

The Principal

