

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

## 1. Introduction:

This policy covers Townley Grammar School's whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Townley Grammar School believes that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSE. We believe that through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference. EDI are fundamental pillars of our school culture and ethos. We wish for all students to feel able to express themselves, be themselves and live safe and happy lives. We will ensure the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents, including through publishing the policy on our school website. The information below complies with our statutory obligations to deliver RSE under sections 34 \& 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It will have due regard for the DfE's statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance and other relevant guidance. We will review the policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme is purposeful and effective.

We believe that RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to an RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBT+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE. An inclusive RSE at School/Trust will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010. Definition of relationships and sex education We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health.

- We take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way and using a gender equity and human rights framework.
- We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content.
- Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.


## 2. Definition:

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, 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.

## 3. Rationale and ethos

- is set in the context of clear values, including the value of family life, marriage and of loving and stable relationships in bringing up children. It should teach children and young people to develop values, attitudes, personal and social skills and increase their knowledge and understanding to make informed decisions and life choices
- is delivered to all students and is taught gradually so that learning can be built up year by year in a way that is appropriate to the age and maturity of each child, responds to the needs they have, and enable them to successfully manage the challenges they face as they grow up
- makes an essential and significant contribution to safeguarding children and young people during their school age years and into the future
- should enable young people to develop skills and confidence to access professional advice and appropriate health services

4. Aims

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Combat ignorance and increase understanding - provide full, honest information about the physical, emotional and social aspects of human sexual development from conception to old age
- To promote the ability to make informed decisions - help young people develop the ability to determine their own values within a moral and legal framework and make decisions about their behaviour which will be beneficial to themselves and partner
- To promote responsible behaviour - increase individual responsibility for sexual behaviour i.e. not passing on sexually transmitted diseases, initiating unwanted pregnancies nor forcing unwanted sexual activity on other people
- Combat exploitation and promote an awareness of the misuse of sex to protect themselves from exploitation to avoid being exploited or exploiting others
- To know how the law applies to sexual relationships
- RSE must be sensitive to the different needs of individual students and may need to evolve and adapt over time as the student population changes.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships


## 5. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within 21C curriculum; Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Pupils may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions which may be delivered 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

There are clear values that underpin Relationships and Sex Education:

- Mutual respect
- Value of family life, marriage and of other loving and stable relationships in bringing up children
- Rights and responsibilities for self and others
- Commitment to safety and well being
- Gender equality
- Acceptance of diversity
- Violence and coercion in relationships are unacceptable

The values in Relationships and Sex education are consistent with the values underpinning the 21C curriculum which aims to enable all children and young people to become:

- Politeness
- Kindness
- Respect
- Courage
- Resilience
- Ambition

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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

## 6. Knowledge and understanding

Relationships and Sex education should increase students' knowledge and understanding in appropriate stages by:

- Understanding the importance of safety and risk
- Learning and understanding emotional and physical development including intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships, mental and physical health
- Learning how to resist unwelcome pressures to be sexually active
- Learning how to avoid unplanned pregnancy and STIs including learning about contraception and infection avoidance (including HIV)
- Learning about pregnancy and the choices available
- Learning about the range of local and national health advice, contraception and support services available
- Understanding the legal aspects of sexual behaviour
- Learning about the links between sexual health and alcohol/drugs
- Understanding the positive benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships
- Learning about the impact of coercion and violence and understanding that consent is critical
- Understanding the arguments for delaying sexual activity
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Understanding rights, responsibilities and safety/legalities of online and media life

It is important that students and young people develop personal and social skills to make informed decisions and life chances including:

- Learning to identify their own emotions and those of others
- Managing emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others
- Communicating openly and respectfully about sex and relationships
- Learning how to identify risk
- Coping with peer pressure
- Asking for help and accessing advice and services


## 7. Statutory requirements

As a secondary school, we must provide RSE to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we're 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.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010

The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

At Townley Grammar School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

## 8. Policy Development

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

- Review - members of staff reviewed all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation - all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation - parents and any interested parties were invited to feedback about the policy via the school website
- Pupil investigation - we investigated what young people want from their RSE education
- Ratification - once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified


## 9. Parental Rights and the Curriculum

Following discussion with the school, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the 'sex' elements of RSE.

Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Health education, Relationships or any other aspect of PSHE education.

There is no right of withdrawal from National Curriculum Science which includes elements of sex education such as puberty and reproduction.

Three terms before they turn 16, a student can opt back in to sex education lessons against their parents' wishes.

A standard letter will inform parents when Relationships and Sex education is being taught which gives them the choice to withdraw their child. The parent/carer would be asked to write to the school to state the reason for the request.

Before granting such a request an appropriate member of staff would discuss the request with the parent/carer to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The materials to be taught would be made available to the parent/carer upon request.

This conversation should be documented. Once these conversations have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school would respect the request of the parent/carer to withdraw the child from the sessions up to and until three terms before the child turns sixteen. At this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. (Children and Social Work Act 2017).

The Children and Social Work Act of 2017 also states that parents/carers are not able to withdraw their child from relationships education in secondary school.

This process is the same for students with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the Headteacher may want to take a student's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

Alternative provision will be made for pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

## 10. Inclusion and the law

The school is sensitive to the fact that students are from a wide variety of cultures, backgrounds and beliefs. However, the school will ensure that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. This will include clear, impartial scientific information on matters such as the changes of puberty, abortion and assisted contraception, as well as covering the law in relation to, for example: marriage; forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and Child Sexual Exploitation.

In the school, teaching will always reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

Schools should pay particular attention to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (s. 149 of the Equality Act).

It is important that RSE caters for all students and is respectful of how students choose to identify themselves, understanding that depending on their age and maturity their sexual orientation and gender identity may be 'emerging'.

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, the school will ensure that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all students understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

The school will aim to ensure that all of the teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. At the point at which the school consider it appropriate to teach students about LGBTQ+, they will ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. The 2019 RSHE Statutory guidance stipulates that schools are free to determine how they do this, and it is expected that all students will be taught LGBTQ+ content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.

We intend the policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic, religious and cultural groups whilst upholding British values.

We will ensure that all students receive Relationship and Sex education and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

There are many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure that young people take responsibility for their actions. Students will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including, for example:

- Marriage
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Domestic violence
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including "sexting", Youthproduced sexual imagery, nudes etc)
- Pornography
- Abortion
- Sexuality
- Gender identity
- Substance misuse
- Violence and exploitation by gangs
- Extremism/radicalisation
- Criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or "county lines" drugs operations)
- Hate crime
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)


## 11. Confidentiality

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16 -year-old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- The young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary seek medical advice
- Child protection concerns will be considered and referred to the DSL under school safeguarding procedures and policies
- The young person will be properly counselled about contraception
- Our students are made clear the procedures with regards to confidentiality
- If questions are asked in class or another context (e.g. assembly) adults will follow the safeguarding protocol of the school (based on DFE guidance). Teachers and other staff are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue where school safeguarding procedures will be followed

Refer to the Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, 2023

## 12. Roles and responsibilities

## Governors

The governing board will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
The Headteacher
Approval of this policy. The Headteacher and leadership team are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from nonstatutory components of RSE.

Staff
Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring, learning, understanding and progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.
Pupils
Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents
Parents are made aware of the right to withdraw from some aspects of our RSE curriculum via email and via our Arbor MiS system. All requests for withdrawal are considered by the headteacher and a decision is communicated in writing.

## 13. Planning and teaching

We have Senior and Middle leaders with responsibility for co-ordinating Relationships and Sex Education.
RSE is delivered across the curriculum but specifically in 21C. Form tutors are responsible for teaching 21 C (PSHE). Certain aspects are delivered by approved professionals/external agencies.
Science National Curriculum Statutory Requirements are met.

Content covered in RSE in Key Stage 3 (Year 7-9) includes but is not limited to:

- Keeping good friendships
- Family relationships
- Personal identity
- Changes to the body during puberty including the menstrual cycle
- Understanding emotions and strategies for a positive mental wellbeing
- Human fertility
- Contraception
- Personal responsibility for health (e.g. personal hygiene, healthy habits, internet use)
- Sexual Relationships and an individual's health (including STIs and HIV)
- Introduction to consent and thinking about personal boundaries and how to set them and the laws to keep them safe
- The effect of the media and the internet on body image

Content covered in RSE in Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) includes but is not limited to:

- Human fertility
- Different types of relationships
- The impact of the Internet and mobile technology on relationships including how explicit material can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively impact how they behave
- Peer pressure and how it may impact the choices they make
- Choices and alternatives to different sexual situations
- Consent in the context of all relationships and the laws surrounding 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
- Self-care
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Contraception and an individual's health (including STIs and HIV)


## 14. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. From time-to-time School/Trust may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSE scheme of work for example: Bexley Women's Aid, School of Sex-ed. External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our RSE by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school. External visitors may include. A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons so as to build on the pupil's learning after the session/s as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have. Any external visitor will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy. We will also ensure that:

- There is appropriate planning, preparatory and follow up work for the session.
- The visitor understands the cohort of children involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics.
- They will also be made aware of any specific issues relating to child protection.
- Safeguarding and child protection School/Trust acknowledges that RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education
- In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures.
- The school may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Teaching materials and resources
RSE resources are chosen for:

- Being inclusive - acknowledging the full spectrum of diversity in society and culture
- Positive, healthy, factual, evidence based and unbiased messages
- Age and understanding appropriateness. We have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs are properly included in sex and relationships education and should help all students understand their learning or physical and emotional difficulties.

How will the school deal with sensitive questions?

- Allow individual staff to use their professional judgement as to answering questions in front of the whole class or individually taking into account the Safeguarding Policy
- Encourage students to ask their parents/carers any questions outside the planned programme
- Set out clear ground rules regarding personal questions
- Students and young people will be informed of where to gain support or help should they wish to raise any questions via access to the school nurse

What kind of language will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in RSE lessons?
We must ensure that the issue of sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying is addressed according to school policies and procedures (refer to Anti-Bullying Policy). Staff will:

- use the correct terms for all body parts and students will be encouraged to use the correct terms for all body parts
- use clear, unequivocal language in an objective manner
- discuss what "slang" words mean and say that some can be seen as offensive


## 15. Monitoring arrangements

The monitoring and evaluation of RSE will take place as part of the school Monitoring and Evaluation cycle.

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Senior and Middle Leaders through: Learning walks, drop-in observations and student voice feedback. Pupils' engagement in RSE is monitored by teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for RSE annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.

Assessment should be made against clear learning outcomes and focus on knowledge, understanding and skills, including, but not limited to:

- Critical reflection
- Decision making and managing risk
- Developing relationships and working with others

16. Documents that support this RSE policy

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

17. Useful links for parents

Sexual Health \& Wellbeing - Brook - Healthy lives for young people
sexeducationforum.org.uk
Sex and relationships | Childline
Academy and free school funding agreements - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Children and Social Work Act 2017 (legislation.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 - What Pupils Should Know

This is what we expect Townley Grammar School students to know by the time they leave us in Upper Sixth Form:

## Family Life

- That there are different types of committed, stable relationships
- How relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children
- What marriage is, including its legal status (e.g., that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony)
- Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into
- The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
- Determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy
- Judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationships is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships
- How to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed


## Respectful relationships, including friendships

- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online), including trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent, the management of conflict and reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g., how they might normalize non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show respect to others, including people in positions of authority, and tolerance of other people's beliefs
- About different types of bullying (including cyber-bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and where to get help
- That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with references to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal


## Keeping Safe Online

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online
- Not to provide material to others that they wouldn't want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- The impact of viewing harmful content
- That specifically sexually explicit material (e.g., pornography) presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online


## Staying Safe

- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation, 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)


## Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship
- That all aspects of health can be affected by choices the make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively (e.g., physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing)
- The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women
- That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- That they have a choice to delay sex or enjoy intimacy without sex
- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- The facts around pregnancy, including miscarriage
- 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, including HIV/AIDs are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including 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
- 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 and advice and treatment


## Appendix 2 - Letter to Parents \& Carers

The following letter is sent home to all parents and carers:
Dear Parent and Carers,

The wellbeing of students is of paramount importance to Townley Grammar School; we pride ourselves on facilitating the development of our students into confident, resilient, compassionate young adults who are able to make wise choices in life. Character and Wellbeing are intrinsic to the fabric of our school community with CWB sessions a mechanism to deliver key learning outcomes for both of these areas. Consequently, we have set out clear expectations of what we believe our students should learn over their secondary school journey.

Our expectations are bespoke to Townley Grammar School but informed by the Department for Education's requirements for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). Even though it's called 'relationships and sex education,' the focus of the mandatory portion of this programme is on:

- Understanding what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like
- Being safe, including online
- Respectful relationships, including friendships

We seek to ensure that our curriculum reflects:

- Our pupils' age and maturity levels, as well as their cultural and religious backgrounds
- The values of our school community
- Every pupil's learning needs
- What pupils need to know to be healthy and safe in school, in their personal relationships and in the wider world

Please find attached a guide to our Relationships and Sex Education curriculum which will be covered via our whole school curriculum. In addition, please find attached an overview of what we expect Townley Grammar school students to know before they leave at the end of Year 13-this is in accordance with DFE requirements.

We encourage you to keep your child in this programme and to have conversations at home about this topic. If you do not wish for your daughter to participate in the RSE session please can you write to the Headteacher, Mrs Pandya, formally outlining your reasons via headteacher@townleygrammar.org.uk Please note that you only have the right to withdraw your child up until the 3rd term before they turn 16. After that, should your child decide that they want to take part in sex education, they may do so without parental consent.

The Department for Education has published some resources for parents/carers that explain what they expect pupils to learn in school and why. You can find them here:

- Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education: FAQs
- Relationships, sex and health education: guides for parents

Yours sincerely,

## Appendix 3 - Relationships and sex education curriculum map



