

Ivetsey Bank Hospital School RSE Policy

Reviewed: September 2025
Next review date: September 2027

Introduction

Relationships and Sex education (RSE) is lifelong learning about healthy relationships, sex, sexuality, emotions, and sexual health. The objective of RSE is to help support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. We recognise the importance of RSE in preparing young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. RSE is taught as part of our PSHE program and some parts of sex education are taught in science.

Intent/Aims

We believe that effective, age-appropriate education about relationships and sex can: Foster positive attitudes and values of love and respect; promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. If young people can make their transition into adulthood with good information and the confidence and knowledge to understand what is happening to them, they will hopefully grow into confident and healthy adults able to make positive choices. We recognise not only the high importance of teaching and assisting our students to understand, recognise and form healthy friendships and relationships, but also the vulnerability that our learners can have in the community when it comes to matters of sexual activity and the possibility of being exploited. As a school we educate students to understand the rights of all people to live freely within their sexual orientation or gender identity without discrimination and prepare our students to live in modern Britain. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and incorporates the 'protected characteristics'. We believe parents and carers have a crucial role to play in their children's learning about healthy relationships and sex education. We intend that the school's RSE programme complements and supports their role. It is taught in a safe, non-judgemental and open forum, allowing the students to discuss their opinions, pre-conceptions and concerns.

Implementation

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, Ivetsey Bank Hospital School ensures that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all students understand the importance of equality and respect. Ivetsey Bank Hospital School ensures that we comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010. Guidance is taken from the DfE Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations (2019).

Staff teaching RSE ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to students, in a carefully sequenced way, within planned lessons. The RSE curriculum will cover topics such as peer pressure, bullying and body shaming, consent, gender and identity, sexism, parenting, child sexual exploitation, relationship break ups and safe sex. We recognise that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity and provide an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same sex relationships. At Ivetsey Bank Hospital School we teach our students about LGBT, we ensure that this content is fully integrated into our programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson, except when we are celebrating Pride week or LGBT history month.

Impact

We firmly believe that a meaningful PSHE curriculum which RSE is embedded is the key to young people becoming confident, tolerant and well-rounded adults.

Evidence shows that good quality RSE reduces teenage pregnancy rates, increases condom use, and decreases the incidence of non-consensual sex. We need to ensure therefore that students with disabilities, special educational needs or are CIN/CIC receive comprehensive RSE that meets their needs.

The Law

It is important for students to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology, this includes:

- Marriage/partnerships - which would always include same sex
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- 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)

Support

Ivetsey Bank Hospital School recognises that for students who are experiencing or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the hospital may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted staff, key workers and social workers to report problems and find support.

Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education which is part of the RSE in PSHE but parts are compulsory in science. However a child will also have a right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16). Before

this is granted the head teacher would discuss this with the parents/carers, the head teacher would be happy to share the teaching materials and content so greater understanding is given. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. **From 1 September 2026** The headteacher may refuse this request in "exceptional circumstances", such as because of safeguarding concerns.

All young people should be entitled to high quality Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in order to help them learn about choice, control and consent to help them form strong and stable couple, family, social and professional relationships throughout their later lives so they can make informed choices. Withdrawing a young person from sex education lessons can have a detrimental effect on the young person. The young person that is not part of the group lesson can then feel different from their peers and will then often seek to find out the content of the sessions which may not be relayed correctly or in a safe environment. Young people will often seek information from unreliable sources when they have been unable to participate in arranged lessons, this can often be from the internet using sites that are not appropriate.

SEN

RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all students, therefore Ivetsey Bank Hospital School delivers high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to ensure accessibility to all students. Ivetsey Bank Hospital School is aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Ivetsey Bank Hospital School ensures that our teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, personal circumstances taken into account and delivered with reference to the law.

From September 2026 - (some of this will be implemented during 2025/6 academic year)

Topic	Pupils should know
Families	<p>That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</p> <p>How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children</p> <p>Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony</p> <p>That 'common-law marriage' is a myth, and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children</p> <p>That forced marriage and marriage before the age of 18 are illegal</p> <p>How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development.</p>

Topic	Pupils should know
	<p>How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust</p>
<p>Respectful relationships, including friendships</p>	<p>About the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships</p> <p>How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal</p> <p>The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others</p> <p>What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs</p> <p>The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict</p> <p>The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</p> <p>Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration</p> <p>The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care and attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says 'yes' to doing something that doesn't automatically make it ethically okay</p> <p>How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or</p>

Topic	Pupils should know
	<p>encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice</p> <p>How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others</p> <p>How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others</p> <p>How some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called 'involuntary celibates' (incels) or online influencers</p>
Online safety and awareness	<p>Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</p> <p>About online risks, including that any material they provide provides to another has the potential to be shared and circulated online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. They should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues</p> <p>Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images</p> <p>About the characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and/or may post things which aren't real or have been created with AI. They should also know that social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online</p> <p>That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime (even if the photo is of themselves or someone who has consented, and even if the photo was created by that child and/or using AI). That there are potentially serious consequences of acquiring or</p>

Topic	Pupils should know
	<p>generating these images. That sharing indecent images of people over 18 without their consent is also a crime</p> <p>How to seek support. They should also understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared</p> <p>What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online</p> <p>About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them</p> <p>That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons</p> <p>Where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamourise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong</p> <p>That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice</p> <p>How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns</p> <p>That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. That this can affect people who see pornographic content accidentally, as well as those who see it deliberately. That pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it</p> <p>How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</p> <p>That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (for example, to enable targeted advertising)</p> <p>That criminals can operate online scams, such as using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks</p>

Topic	Pupils should know
	<p>of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion</p> <p>That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. That it is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk</p>
Being safe	<p>How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent</p> <p>That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others</p> <p>How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed</p> <p>How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. About ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. That there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. About the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and they should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions</p> <p>What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it</p> <p>That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language, attention or touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting</p> <p>About concepts and laws relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault ○ Harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but

Topic	Pupils should know
	<p>also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour ○ Harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation ○ Forced marriage ○ Female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty <p>That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed</p> <p>That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury</p> <p>That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death</p> <p>That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful</p> <p>How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour, or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault</p>
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<p>That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive</p> <p>The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex</p> <p>About sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, such as the law, their faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent</p>

Topic	Pupils should know
	<p>That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing</p> <p>That some sexual behaviours can be harmful</p> <p>The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making</p> <p>That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help</p> <p>How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use)</p> <p>About the use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma</p> <p>About the prevalence of STIs, the short and long-term impact they can have on those who contract them, and key facts about treatment</p> <p>How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour</p> <p>How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms</p> <p>How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</p>

Roles and Responsibilities

Ivetsey Bank Hospital School will ensure:

- Clear information is provided to parents/carers on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support
- All points of view that staff may express during the course of teaching RSE are unbiased

- The emphasis of teaching RSE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices.
- If a student has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, staff will refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The RSE programme will be led by Kathleen Lewis PSHE Lead and will be also taught by other teachers. Teachers will receive appropriate RSE training and guidance.

Responsibility for the RSE policy in Ivetsey Bank Hospital School lies with the governing body.

Safeguarding, Reports of Abuse and Confidentiality

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Ivetsey Bank Hospital School students are aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. All staff are trained and aware of procedures if a student makes a disclosure. Please see the safeguarding policy.

Links to other policies/documents/websites

Guides for Parents/carers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>

DfE Teaching online safety in school January 2023

DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance

Due to the nature of our service it wouldn't be feasible to consult parents/carers about changes being made to our RSE curriculum. This would be discussed in a governing body meeting, looking at the following:

- Age
- Physical and emotional maturity
- Religious and cultural backgrounds
- Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

If we have young people in our service that have experienced abuse we may change when RSE is being taught as a group as this could have a detrimental effect on their mental health. We would always be guided by the Consultant and MDT, 1:1 sessions can be organised if needed.