



IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL

WOOLVERSTONE HALL
SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

2025 - 2026

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2025-2026

Ipswich High School is a proprietorial school owned by Ipswich Education Limited (IEL), whose Board has the legal responsibility to ensure that all regulatory requirements are met. This means that the Proprietorial Board has a role that is different to many independent schools. It is the role of the Proprietorial Board to provide the school with strategic guidance and oversight. The Proprietorial Board, therefore, have powers of scrutiny and are enabled to make recommendations for change and improvement. The Proprietorial Board are supported by voluntary advisors who will offer their advice as a “critical friend”. Board meetings are held every term.

The policy was ratified by the Proprietorial Board on the 7th February 2023.

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1 Introduction

This policy covers the Ipswich High 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 our 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.

All children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSE.

Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools and the community.

We are also committed to an RSE curriculum 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. Our SENCO department aid with the planning and delivery of the subject. Their support and feedback are valued in the delivery of complex topics.

We will also take steps to ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when planning and delivering RSE.

2 Definitions

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.

3 Aims

As an all through school our RSE programme 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
- To give pupils the knowledge and understanding they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
- To know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.
- To enable pupils to understand contraception
- To enable pupils to understand the nature of intimate relationships, the importance of consent, and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).
- To ensure an effective understanding of the nature, and fundamental importance, of consent
- To highlight the positive effects that good relationships have on mental wellbeing and how to identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- To enable pupils to mature, to build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.
- To deliver a programme that supports the pupils throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.
- To provide knowledge about safer sex and sexual health to ensure that pupils are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.

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).

Our provision will not encourage early sexual experimentation but will strive to teach pupils to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

4 Responsibilities

The Head of Prep is ultimately responsible for Relationships, Health and Sex Education provision up until the end of Year 6. The Head of Senior is then ultimately

responsible for the provision for pupils in Years 7-13. There is a Head of PSHE, across the whole school. At the Prep, there is a PSHE Lead.

In our Preparatory School each year group is taught by our specialist Preparatory team in discrete PSHE lessons. Class teachers also assist with the delivery of some aspects of the curriculum through topic-based activities. For pupils in Years 7-13, the Head of PSHE will develop and administer the programme, with support from other staff when required, for example the School Nurse. In the Senior School the pupils also have discrete PSHE lessons taught by a specialist team, as well as supplementary provision in Registration Time (Votes for Schools), stand-alone drop-down sessions, assemblies and enrichment activities.

Both the Head of PSHEs for Prep and Senior Schools will consult with the Head of Prep, Head of Senior School (& DSL) and School Nurse to ensure that all requirements are met.

The role of parents/carers in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

Ipswich High School has or will:

- Consult with parents/carers when planning the RSE policy.
- Ensure parents have access to the policy (online or hard copy at request).
- Ensure that parents/carers know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn, up until three terms before the child's 16th birthday, from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.
- Encourage parents/carers to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through RSE.
- Provide a help/support page on the PSHE Firefly page with information and helplines which parents can access to support their children when needed.

5 The RSE Programme

At Ipswich High School, we value PSHE as one way to support children's development as human beings, to enable them to understand and respect who they are, to empower them with a voice and to equip them for life and learning. We include the statutory Relationships and Health Education within our whole-school PSHE Programme. To ensure progression and a spiral curriculum, we use Jigsaw scheme of work, the mindful approach to PSHE, as our chosen teaching and learning programme and tailor it to our children's needs. The mapping document,

and statutory Relationships and Health Education, shows exactly how our school, meets the statutory Relationships and Health Education requirements.

Ages 3-11

The Relationships and Health Education in the Prep School is taught through the Jigsaw unit of *The Relationships and Healthy Me* puzzle units, which cover, 'Families and people who care for me', 'Caring friendships', 'Respectful relationships', 'Online relationships', and 'Being safe'. The expected outcomes for each of these elements can be found on the PSHE progression map. Whilst the *Relationships Puzzle* unit in Jigsaw covers most of the statutory Relationships Education, some of the outcomes are also taught elsewhere in Jigsaw e.g. the Celebrating Difference Puzzle helps children appreciate that there are many types of family composition and that each is important to the children involved. This holistic approach ensures the learning is reinforced through the year and across the curriculum.

For Health Education in the Prep School we cover 'Mental wellbeing', 'Internet safety and harms', 'Physical health and fitness', 'Healthy eating', 'Drugs, alcohol and tobacco', 'Health and prevention', 'Basic First Aid', 'Changing adolescent body'. The expected outcomes for each of these elements can be found further on in this policy. Whilst the *Healthy Me Puzzle* unit in Jigsaw covers most of the statutory Health Education, some of the outcomes are taught elsewhere in Jigsaw e.g. emotional and mental health is nurtured every lesson through the 'Calm me' time, social skills are grown every lesson through the 'Connect us' activity and respect is enhanced through the use of the Jigsaw Charter.

At Ipswich High Prep School, we believe children should understand the facts about human reproduction before they leave primary school. Puberty is taught as a statutory requirement of Health Education and covered by our Jigsaw PSHE Programme in the 'Changing Me' Puzzle unit. We conclude that sex education refers to Human Reproduction, and therefore inform parents of their right to request their child be withdrawn from the PSHE lessons that explicitly teach this i.e. the Jigsaw Changing Me Puzzle unit e.g.

- Year 4, Lesson 2 (Having a baby)
- Year 5, Lesson 4 (Conception)
- Year 6, Lesson 3 (Conception, birth)

In order to teach this in a scientific context and knowing that National Curriculum Science in Year 5 requires children to know how mammals reproduce, we have also opted to teach this within our Year 5 Science curriculum. Therefore, the parent right to withdraw their child is not applicable. We are of course happy to discuss the content of the curriculum and invite you to contact Mrs Finch (Head of Prep), should you have any questions or concerns.

Class teachers deliver these lessons in mixed ability groups of boys and girls. However, in Year 5 and Year 6, selected sessions are taught in single sex groups. Our school nurse also supports sessions, where appropriate, and children have the opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns or worries.

Ages 11-16

The Relationships, Health and Sex Education in the Senior School is taught through the Jigsaw units of *Relationships* and *Healthy Me* puzzle units, which cover, 'Families and people who care for me', 'Caring friendships', 'Respectful relationships', 'Online relationships', and 'Being safe'. The expected outcomes for each of these elements can be found on the PSHE progression map. Whilst the *Relationships* Puzzle unit in Jigsaw covers most of the statutory Relationships Education, some of the outcomes are also taught elsewhere in Jigsaw e.g. the *Celebrating Difference* Puzzle helps children appreciate that there are many types of family composition and that each is important to the children involved. This holistic approach ensures the learning is reinforced through the year and across the curriculum.

For Health Education in the Senior School we cover 'Mental wellbeing', 'Internet safety and harms', 'Physical health and fitness', 'Healthy eating', 'Drugs, alcohol and tobacco', 'Health and prevention', 'Basic First Aid', 'Changing adolescent body'. The expected outcomes for each of these elements can be found further on in this policy. Whilst the *Healthy Me* Puzzle unit in Jigsaw covers most of the statutory Health Education, some of the outcomes are taught elsewhere in Jigsaw e.g. emotional and mental health is nurtured every lesson through the 'Calm me' time, social skills are grown every lesson through the 'Connect us' activity and respect is enhanced through the use of the Jigsaw Charter.

The Relationships, Health and Sex Education Programme will be delivered through a variety of channels that include:

- **Weekly (Yr7 & 8) & Fortnightly (Yr9-11) PHSE lessons delivered by the PSHE Department**
- **The Biology curriculum:** Reproductive anatomy and sexual reproduction, the menstrual cycle, and aspects of fertility
- **Assemblies:** On a variety of topics such as Positive Health and Positive Identity, Online and media (including social), Being safe, Consent
- **Stand-alone Drop Down Sessions:** Focused extended sessions targeting elements of the PSHE programme, for example Careers and Healthy Living
- **Registration:** Weekly session delivered via the Votes for Schools platform, to engage pupils in current affairs and contemporary SMSC issues. The focus on a democratic voice emphasises elements of British Values.

The PSHE Department teachers deliver these lessons in mixed ability groups of boys and girls. Our school nurse also supports sessions, where appropriate, and children have the opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns or worries.

Ages 16-18

Though not a statutory requirement, we recognise that delivering an effective, relevant and robust RSE Programme to our 6th Form students is best practice. This

program, our 'Gen Next' curriculum, is delivered through a variety of channels, which include:

- **Stand Alone weekly timetabled sessions delivered by the 6th Form Pastoral Team and PSHE Department (Monday EN1)**
- **Ad-Hoc Tutorial Sessions**
- **Assemblies:** On a variety of topics such as Positive Health and Positive Identity, Online and media (including social), Being safe, Consent
- **Drop-down Sessions**

In both the Preparatory and Senior sections of the school, the co-curricular programme actively promotes many aspects of positive health and wellbeing. We encourage all pupils to maintain a broad and fulfilling programme to promote all round health and wellbeing.

When possible, sex education will take place in small groups so that questions and discussions are encouraged, and account is taken of the different levels of maturity.

RSE lessons may consider questions or issues that some pupils will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons there is a reminder and agreement of the ground rules, which are established at the beginning of the course that prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson.

When pupils ask questions, we will aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established. The opportunity to ask questions anonymously may be used. If it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the pupils, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

We will always sign post children at the end of each lesson to where they can get help or talk to an appropriate adult.

Keeping children safe is our priority, and we recognise that our provision can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 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.

We will strive to maintain an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This should include when they have a concern about a friend or peer.

Staff know what to do if a pupil tells them that they are being abused or neglected or are witnessing abuse.

Staff know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a member of the DSL team) must be informed of anything that is safeguarding-related in the context of these subjects.

External visitors will be advised on how they must deal with, and report, any safeguarding concerns.

6 Right of Withdrawal

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE. Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education, from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum or from Health Education.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.

Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the Head of Prep (for Prep pupils) or Head of PHSE (Y7-13) to discuss their concerns. The member of staff contacted will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum. If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the Head in writing and the school will keep a record of this.

We will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16 years old. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will arrange to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

All children will have the right to opt into sex education three terms before they turn 16 and the school will arrange for this to happen. In practice, this means that when a child turns 15 they have the right to be taught sex education if they want to.

7 Policy Development & Evaluation

The school is required to consult with parents when developing and renewing this policy, in line with statutory guidance. Each year the Head of PSHE contacts all parents/carers by email to survey their views on what should be included in the RSE curriculum. This email includes an invitation to contact the Head of PSHE to discuss any feedback.

During the academic year a variety of staff are consulted when required to respond to the specific needs of the school cohort. This group of staff will usually include some of the following:

- Head of PSHE
- Head of Prep
- Head of Senior
- Director of Pastoral & Boarding
- Head of Sixth Form & Deputy Head of Sixth Form
- School Nurse
- Heads of Year

We are committed to the on-going development of RSE in our school. We will use the following indicators to monitor and evaluate our progress:

- A coordinated and consistent approach to curriculum delivery has been adopted.
- The content of the RSE curriculum is flexible and responsive to pupils' differing needs, which are gathered through continuous consultations with relevant staff (see above).
- Pupils are receiving a RSE curriculum in line with national and local guidance.
- There are clearly identified learning objectives for RSE activities and pupils' learning is assessed.
- Training for staff to keep updated.

This policy will be on the school website and freely available on request to the whole school community once fully published.

8 Policy Review

This policy will be formally reviewed each year to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose.

Last review/update: June 2022 made by Mark Howe (Headteacher) in conjunction with the Heads of PHSE, Senior School Deputy Head and Head of Prep. Parent consultation June 2022.

The IHS RSE Policy was approved by the IHS Proprietorial Board on 7th February 2023.

Update & review to RSE Policy2022-23 v2: November 2022 made by Mark Speakman (Head of PSHE), approved by Ian Davies (Acting Headteacher) and Kim Pigram (IHS Proprietorial Board Lead for Safeguarding).

Update: September 2023 made by Head of PSHE

Update: September 2024 made by Head of PSHE

Ratified by Chair of the Proprietorial Board

Ipswich High School

Signature: -----

Mr Jamie Smith

Date: -----