



Bristol Free School
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Headteacher: Mrs S. King

25 November 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

At BFS we are committed to educating and developing the whole person and our PSHE programme is one of the ways we do this within our curriculum. As our students move through the school, we are committed to developing not only their academia, but also their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural well-being. PSHE gives us the opportunity to develop students' knowledge, skills, and attributes, which support them in making positive, safe, and healthy decisions both now and in the future.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is an important part of the PSHE curriculum. We take a curriculum-based approach to teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social aspects of sexuality. We aim to equip our students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will empower them to: appreciate their health, well-being, and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives. We believe that RSE is important in giving students a place to discuss pressures, check facts and dispel myths. We are aware that many students will discuss issues with each other outside of the classroom; therefore, we would rather the students receive information through carefully planned lessons. An overview of our planned RSE curriculum for the 2025/26 academic year is attached.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from some aspects of sex education; this does not include what is taught as part of the Science curriculum or any aspect of relationships education or health education. However, a child will also have the right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16). This includes the right to receive all aspects of sex education from which they had been previously withdrawn. Any request to withdraw a child from sex education must be made directly to the Headteacher, Mrs. King. Further guidance can be found on the accompanying leaflet on the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812594/RSE_secondary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf

Parents/Carers are the most important educators of young people in personal issues. You may find it helpful to begin discussing this topic at home ahead of the lessons, or you may find that your child begins asking more questions when these lessons are being taught.

Our current RSE Policy was updated to reflect the 2020 statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education. This will be reviewed and updated to reflect new statutory guidance for first teaching in September 2026. We aim to consult parents and carers about the new guidance and teaching materials for next year in the summer of 2026. We will welcome any parental comments and feedback at that time.

Please find details of when particularly sensitive content is covered for Years 7-11 overleaf, with the full curriculum available online: <https://www.bristolfreeschool.org.uk/curriculum-se>

Yours faithfully

Mr D East
Deputy Headteacher



	Term 3	Term 5	Term 6
Year 7	Friends, Respect and Relationships: consent & boundaries; respectful relationships; managing quality friendships; long term relationships; being positive; pressure & influence; challenging male stereotypes. Science: reproductive systems and reproduction	Puberty and Body Development: Healthy lifestyles; Health issues; Physical changes; Feelings; Hormones; Hygiene and oral health.	
Year 8	Relationships and Sex Education: introduction to RSE and consent; healthy relationships & conflict; sexual orientation & discrimination; periods and the menstrual cycle; introduction to contraception.	Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing: health and wellbeing; happiness and positive wellbeing; self-esteem and resilience; mental health concerns and illness; understanding self-harm; understanding eating disorders.	
Year 9	Sex, the law and consent: sexual consent and the law; FGM and the law; choosing when to have sex; what are STIs; introduction to pornography; relationships and partners.		Healthy lifestyles: healthy eating; benefits of exercise; sleep hygiene; impact of unhealthy lifestyle; self-examination and screening; importance of oral health; understanding illness.
Year 10	Sexual Ethics: Sexual consent & the law; Sexting & nudes; pornography; Contraception & safe sex; Challenging stereotypes. Science: hormonal regulation of the menstrual cycle, contraception & IVF	Mental & Physical Health: Mental health & illness; resilience & self-esteem; eating disorders; impact of substance misuse; impact of smoking & vaping; understanding cancer.	
Year 11	Relationships & family: sexual harassment & sexual assault; domestic abuse & coercive control; the risks of alcohol; revisiting STIs; long-term relationships; choosing to start a family.		