

Relationship and Sex Education Policy



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| Approved by: | Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director) | Date: 1 st September 2025 |
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| Last reviewed on: | 25 th March 2025 |
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| Next review due by: | 1 st September 2026 |
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All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of all that we do.

1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships including LGBT
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To provide information and advice on sexual health.
- To provide information on how to recognise controlling and abusive relationships

2. Statutory requirements

This policy meets the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

3. 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 – the directors pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – Firstly the SLT and those teaching staff responsible for the delivery of RSE were consulted. The RSE curriculum was then discussed with the remainder of the staff
- Parents were consulted by letter regarding the content of the RSE curriculum
- Pupils were consulted
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was approved by the Directors

4. Definition

RSE is about preparing pupils for the challenges they will face when creating a happy and successful adult life. Pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. RSE will support pupils in putting this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support. High quality RSE is an evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects, which helps prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out in as per Appendix 1; informed by statutory requirements, government guidance and PHSE Association schemes of work and resources. We may need to adapt it as and when necessary, to account for any in to local initiatives, community priorities or parental requests to withdraw from non-mandated topics of RSE (see section 8 below). We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

In line with statutory guidance our curriculum is centred on two core principles, relationship sex education and physical health and mental wellbeing. Our curriculum is designed to continue to build on primary RSE content and in addition develop knowledge of extended content by the end of secondary school.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1 and 2.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. RSE has significant links with wider curriculum areas, with biological aspects of RSE taught within the science curriculum. Where possible, the RSE curriculum will be supported by targeted sessions 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 – committed relationships, marriage, law and legal status in relationships and children and parenting.
- Respectful relationships and friendships – characteristics, stereotyping, discrimination, respect, bullying, cyberbullying, behaviour in relationships and equality.
- Online media – rights and responsibilities online, risks, sharing information, exposure to harmful content online and reporting any concerns.
- Being safe – concept and law in relation to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM.
- Intimate sexual relationships and sexual health – healthy intimate relationships, reproductive health, contraception, pregnancy and STIs.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. Physical health, mental wellbeing

and RSE are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health and mental wellbeing contribute to healthy relationships. Linked content to RSE includes:

- Mental Wellbeing – mental health, emotions, feelings, expression, self-care, hobbies and mental health conditions.
- Internet safety – risks associated with use, behaviour online, confidentiality, social media, online gaming and reporting concerns.
- Healthy lifestyles – Physical health and exercise, healthy diet, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, risks to health and prevention of illness including first aid.
- Changing adolescent body – physical and emotional changes through puberty and the menstrual cycle.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance, and share any relevant materials on request.

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.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Directors

The Directors will approve the RSE policy, and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

7.2 The head teacher

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE
- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the head teacher.

7.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Parents will receive confirmation in writing of the RSE intent for at the start of an academic year. The same letter is available on the school website. In response to this letter requests for withdrawal should be provided in writing and addressed to the head teacher or curriculum lead. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The head teacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a pupil's specific vulnerability, the head teacher can refuse a request to withdraw the pupil from sex education.

9. Training

Relevant staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. The school will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the directors (Jane Cox and Penny Harris) through half termly visits to the school and including work scrutinies, learning walks and conversations with staff and pupils. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the directors annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the head teacher.

Appendix 1: Schemes of work for RSE each academic year.

| Year : 7 Year | | |
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| Term: | Unit/Module | Description of work planned: |
| Spring 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Diversity, prejudice, and bullying.</i> Students learn: about identity rights and responsibilities, living in a diverse society, the terms prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination and the signs and effects of bullying including online. |
| Summer 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Self-worth, romance and friendships (including online) and relationship boundaries.</i> Students learn about qualities and behaviours relating to different types of positive relationships and how to recognise unhealthy relationships. Introduction to expectations in romantic relationships and consent. |
| Year : 8 Year | | |
| Term: | Unit/Module | Description of work planned: |
| Spring 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Discrimination in all its forms, including: racism, religious discrimination, disability, discrimination, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.</i> Students learn how to manage influences on beliefs and decisions. Students will explore group-think and persuasion. Students will learn about gender identity and gender-based discrimination. Students will learn appropriate ways to challenge forms of discrimination. |
| Summer 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Gender identity, sexual orientation, consent, 'sexting', and an introduction to contraception.</i> Students will further explore qualities of positive relationships and how to demonstrate positive behaviour in relationships. Students will learn about gender identity and sexual orientation. Students will look at the legalities and morality of consent, risks of sexting and basic methods of contraception. |
| Year : 9 Year | | |
| Term: | Unit/Module | Description of work planned: |
| Spring 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Families and parenting, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and relationship changes.</i> Students will learn about different types of family including single parent, same sex parent, blended families, adoption and fostering. Students will explore positive relationships in the home and ways to reduce homelessness in young people. |
| Summer | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Relationships and sex education including consent, contraception, the risks of STIs, and attitudes to</i> |

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| 1 | | <i>pornography</i> . Students will learn about readiness for sexual activity, the choices to delay sex and intimacy outside sex. Students will further explore consent, safe sex, contraception and STIs. Students will learn about assessing and managing risks of sending, sharing or passing on sexual content online and how sex and relationships are portrayed in the media and pornography. |
| Year : 10 Year | | |
| Term: | Unit/Module | Description of work planned: |
| Spring 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Relationships and sex expectations, pleasure and challenges, including the impact of the media and pornography</i> . Students will learn relationship values and the role of pleasure in relationships. Students will explore assumptions, misconceptions and social norms about sex, gender and relationships. Students will learn about the opportunities and risks of forming and conducting relationships online and managing the impact of media and pornography on sexual attitudes, expectations and behaviours. Students will learn about abstinence, asexuality and celibacy. |
| Summer 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Communities, belonging and challenging extremism</i> . Students will learn about inclusion, respect and belonging and relevant legislation such as the Equality act. Students will learn about how the media may distort or mis-represent information to influence beliefs and opinions. Students will learn how to safely challenge discrimination, including online; and will know how to recognise and respond to extremism of radicalisation. |
| Year : 11 Year | | |
| Term: | Unit/Module | Description of work planned: |
| Spring 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Personal values, assertive communication (including in relation to contraception and sexual health), relationship challenges and abuse</i> . Students will further explore core values and linked emotions. Students will continue to develop their understanding of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. Students will practise assertive communication. Students will learn how to handle unwanted attention, including online and appropriate challenges of any forms of harassment or stalking. Students will gain increased awareness of unhealthy, abusive and exploitative relationships and related support. |
| Summer 1 | Core Theme: Relationships | <i>Different families and parental responsibilities, pregnancy, marriage and forced marriage and changing relationships</i> . Students will explore changing family structures and evaluate readiness for parenthood and parenting qualities. Students will learn about fertility, pregnancy, birth and miscarriage; including unplanned pregnancy options and abortion. Students will learn about |

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| | | managing change, loss, grief and bereavement. Students will learn about 'honour based' violence and forced marriage and how to safely access support. |
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Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

| Topic | Pupils should know |
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| 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> <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> |
| Respectful relationships, including friendships | <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</p> |

| Topic | Pupils should know |
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| | <p>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 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</p> |

| Topic | Pupils should know |
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| | <p>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 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> |

| Topic | Pupils should know |
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| | <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 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 also |

| Topic | Pupils should know |
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| | <p>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> <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> |

| Topic | Pupils should know |
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| | <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> |

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE

| TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS | | | |
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| Name of child | | Class | |
| Name of parent | | Date | |
| Reason for withdrawing from non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within relationships and sex education | | | |
| | | | |
| Any other information you would like the school to consider | | | |
| | | | |
| Parent signature | | | |

| TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL | |
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| Agreed actions from discussion with parents | |