



TOWNLEY
— EST 1937 —
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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 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

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

- 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, and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships

5. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within Character and Wellbeing (CWB) 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, not just intimate relationships, including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Teachers will make sure that pupils understand the importance of equality and respect, and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, by the end of their secondary education.

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

It is important for secondary pupils to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help pupils identify what is right and wrong, and can provide a foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion. These topics include, but are not limited to:

- Marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty
- Sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, including grooming and sextortion
- Pornography
- Abortion
- The protected characteristics
- The age of criminal responsibility

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.

5.1 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons and talks, ensure pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

5.2 Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age and maturity of the pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

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/carers 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.

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

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”, Youth produced 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, 2024](#)

12. Roles and responsibilities

Trustees

The trust 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 non-statutory 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 21C (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)

13.1 Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are accurate, age and stage appropriate and unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case-study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We won't, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme
- Work with agencies who don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers

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 may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSE scheme of work for example: Bexley Women's Aid, It Happens Education. 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. Townley Grammar School is a member of the PSHE association and shares training resources from the charity with staff.

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 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, following a due diligence process.

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 Culture Policy

17. Useful links for parents

[Sexual Health & Wellbeing - Brook – Healthy lives for young people
sexeducationforum.org.uk](https://www.brook.org.uk/healthy-lives-for-young-people/sexual-health-and-wellbeing/)

[Sex and relationships | Childline](https://www.childline.gov.uk/)

[Academy and free school funding agreements - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/academy-and-free-school-funding-agreements)

[Children and Social Work Act 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/62/section-100)

[PSHE Association](https://www.pshe-association.org/)

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:

Families

- That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children.
- 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.

- That 'common-law marriage' is a myth and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children.
- That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal.⁸
- How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.
- 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.
- 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.

Respectful relationships

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- 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.
- 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.
- Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration.
- The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, 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 ok.
- How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- Pupils should have an opportunity to discuss 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.

Online safety and awareness

- Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- Online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online. Pupils should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues.
- The characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and / or may post things which aren't real / have been created with AI. 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.
- 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.
- That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Pupils should know how to seek support and should 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. Pupils should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime.
- 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.
- 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.
- That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught 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 glamorise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong.
- That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice.
- 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.
- 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. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately.

Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it.

- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
- That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (e.g. to enable targeted advertising).
- That criminals can operate online scams, for example 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.
- 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. 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.

Being Safe

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. Pupils should learn ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. Pupils should understand 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. Pupils might reflect on the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions.
- 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.
- That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting.
- The concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault.
- The concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language.
- The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.
- That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.
- The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation.
- The concepts and laws relating to forced marriage.
- The physical and emotional damage which can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty, where to find support, and the law around these areas. This should include that it is a criminal offence for anyone to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, in the UK or abroad, or to fail to protect a person under 16 for whom they are responsible.

- That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury. 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.
- 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.
- 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, e.g. the law, faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent.
- 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.
- That some sexual behaviours can be harmful.
- 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 decisionmaking.
- 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.
- How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use). 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
- The prevalence of STIs, the short and long term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.
- How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms.
- 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.

Appendix 2 – Letter to Parents & Carers

The following letter is sent home to all parents and carers:

September 2025

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 is 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 Acting Headteacher, Miss Totty, 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/ carer 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,

Louisa Butler
Assistant Headteacher