

BIRMINGHAM INDEPENDENT COLLEGE

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

Next Review: 01/12/2027

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Birmingham Independent College (BIC) is aware of its duty to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education for children and young person/people (CYP) with a wide range of physical and associated disabilities, including varying degrees of learning difficulties, speech & language and sensory impairment.
- 1.2 Our College adopts an open and positive attitude to the CYP's physical and emotional development. Every CYP is valued as an individual and actively encouraged to develop a positive self-image. The mandatory elements of RSE&H up to the age of sixteen are delivered within the curriculum by means appropriate to CYP' levels of understanding, and are clearly documented. The inevitable issues associated with puberty and sexual development are recognised and addressed by BIC in a sensitive, informative and positive way, in consultation with parents. Colleagues are provided with clear guidelines, and CYP protected from inappropriate instruction or behaviour.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 BIC's RSE&H should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
- BIC Equality & Access Policy
 - DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- 2.2 The mandatory or compulsory elements of RSE&H relate to the Education Act 1996, to the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and to the DfE Statutory Guidance 2020 which states 'In special schools..... there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of CYP at different developmental stages. As with all teaching for these subjects, schools should ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.'
- 2.3 Additionally, it is the policy of the BIC to support CYP through puberty and adolescence with clear information about the physical and emotional changes they are experiencing, assurances of their normality, encouragement to regard their developing bodies positively, support for appropriate relationships, guidance on socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and on keeping safe.
- 2.4 BIC recognises the benefit of ongoing consultation with parents, to ensure an effective and appropriate delivery of RSE&H for each child and young person (CYP). Parents will be informed on a regular basis of their statutory right to withdraw individual CYP from all but the mandatory elements of National Curriculum Sex Education up to the age of sixteen, if they so wish, it is hoped that with careful explanation and involving parents in discussion that a request for a withdrawal is extremely unlikely.
- 2.5 BIC recognizes the importance of CYPs' faith backgrounds and takes the religious background of all CYP into account when teaching these subjects.
- 2.6 Owing to the particular 'protected characteristics' of CYP at BIC (which mean that they are statistically at greater risk) it is important that colleagues are supported in using bespoke 'in- house' teaching resources, written especially for the CYP which address issues (eg. intimate care and 'safe' touch) in a way that is relevant for BIC's CYP. BIC uses the services of external RSE specialists to train and support all in the delivery of RSE.

- 2.7 BIC is aware of issues, within society such as everyday sexism, misogyny, systemic racism, homophobia and gender stereotypes and takes positive action (through training, working groups, inclusive educational resources) to build a culture which is positive and where these are not tolerated.
- 2.8 BIC ensures that CYP are taught about sexual orientation and gender identity at a time that is right for them developmentally. LGBT+ content is fully integrated into the RSE&H materials that are used.

3. **AIMS**

3.1 The aims of the RSE&H programme at BIC are to:

- a) support CYP through their physical, sexual, emotional and moral development
- b) encourage a positive self-image of themselves as disabled people to raise confidence and empower CYP
- c) emphasise the normality of sexual feelings and behaviour
- d) promote healthy and appropriate relationships
- e) establish patterns of socially acceptable behaviour
- f) keep the CYP safe.
- g) raise CYP awareness (where possible) of wider issues in society (re.2.7)
- h) teach CYP that they have a right to form both friendships and intimate relationships, in adult life
- i) promote the mental wellbeing of our CYP
- j) promote the health of our CYP
- k) promote the understanding of healthy living for our CYP

4. **IMPLEMENTATION**

4.1. RSE&H at BIC will be delivered clearly, positively and sensitively, as appropriate to the age and maturity of CYP. Teachers will be supported by the Operations Manager, and attend training courses as necessary.

4.2 The following core areas will be taught:

- a) Families and people who care for me
- b) Caring Friendships
- c) Respectful relationships
- d) Online Relationships
- e) Being Safe
- f) Preparation for the changes physical and emotional which occur during puberty
- g) AAC communication (PECS), ensuring that CYP who use AAC are taught where to find the key language needed to communicate about RSE&H issues and are taught the relevant PECS cards.
- h) Strategies for Mental wellbeing
- i) Physical Health and Fitness (including body awareness)
- j) Healthy Eating
- k) Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco
- l) Health and Prevention
- m) Basic First Aid
- n) Changing Adolescent Body
- o) Keeping safe online

NB.' Healthy Eating', 'Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco' and 'Basic First Aid', are unlikely to be relevant topics for many of the CYP at BIC. It is recommended that where appropriate, CYP are educated about their

own specific medical needs and begin to build up an understanding of the purpose of their own medication, health appointments/clinics and equipment. For older CYP this may include a discussion about how alcohol could react with their medication and help them to make informed decisions.

4.3 It is important to acknowledge that 4.2 are not seen as lists to be worked through. Each CYP will work on areas of relevance and importance to them.

4.4 Where possible older CYP (16+) will be encouraged to direct some of their own learning e.g. choosing which part of RSE&H they want to focus on, their views will be taken into account.

5. HEALTH

5.1 Each CYP's timetable has a minimum of 4 hours physical activity. Keeping the CYP fit and healthy is at the very core of BIC's purpose.

5.2 Where appropriate, for the more cognitively able who may have some sort of independence, the concepts of healthy living will be taught.

6. MONITORING

6.1 The BIC RSE&H Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Operations Manager and Head of College.

6.2 The Operations Manager is available to all colleagues and parents to help discuss and plan relevant.