



# BEIS YAAKOV JEWISH HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY

## RSE POLICY

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Signed by Chair of Committee	

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## 1. Introduction

BYJHS follows the guidelines in The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This makes it mandatory for primary schools to offer Relationships Education and for secondary schools to offer Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

This policy is also informed by:

- o Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- o Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- o Equality Act (2010),
- o Keeping Children Safe in Education – statutory safeguarding guidance (2021)
- o Children and Social Work Act (2017)

The RSE policy supports/complements the following policies:

- ❖ Safeguarding Policy
- ❖ Online Safety Policy
- ❖ Acceptable use of technologies
- ❖ School Ethos Policy

**The purpose of this policy** is to set out the aims, rationale, delivery and outcomes of RSE in our school.

**The aim of RSE** in our school is:

*To equip our pupils with the knowledge, skills and self-efficacy, rooted firmly in Jewish values and teachings, to deal with complexity of relationships as they are growing up and to build a happy and successful adult life.*

We recognise that children are growing up in an increasingly changing and complex world, both online and offline. Children deserve and need guidance to support them to gain the necessary knowledge, cognitive, emotional and behavioural skills to navigate, understand and become fulfilled, wholesome individuals and be a productive part of society.

Relationships, families and communities are the very fabric of society and ensuring these are rooted in strong values, mutual respect and are harmonious is essential for individuals and transfer to society at large.

**Underpinning knowledge** will be delivered in the context of the pupils' Jewish faith and social values. Delivery of RSE will be consistent with the ethos policy of the school. In shaping this policy, the school will consult with parents and understand the profile and circumstances of the range of families in the school. This will ensure that RSE in the school is sensitive and well matched to the pupils in the school.

## 2. Intended outcomes for RSE

BYJHS recognises the importance of quality RSE to prepare young people for a happy and successful future. RSE should support core concepts and behaviours that contribute to greater resilience and healthy relationships and intimacy at the appropriate time in adult life. It should lower the risks of young people being drawn in to abusive, coercive or otherwise unhealthy relationships. Many aspects of our lives now have an online element, and young people need to be prepared for the risks that this involves, so that they can navigate their experiences safely.

Even where intimacy generally begins much later than most children nationally (such as in our school community, in the social group to which our children and their parents affiliate), we believe that there is value in resilience building and promoting a strong understanding of healthy relationships early on. This will develop transferable knowledge for later relationships and the capacity for children to make sound decisions in their lives at whatever stage they enter into intimate relationships. They will be more prepared for their future when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.

Children will also become more empowered to recognise and resist safeguarding risks, by becoming more aware of associated behaviours of inappropriate relationships, touch and attention.

A well-developed RSE curriculum in our school will be based on the DfE guidelines which note that *'content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents.'*

Our curriculum will take account of the school ethos, demographic profile, lifestyles, risks and challenges faced by pupils. The school will listen to parents and pupils through a range of consultation methods (see section below).

**Specific outcomes can be grouped under the following categories (as per the competencies model of PSHE Association) within which the requisite knowledge and topics will be acquired:**

- **Autonomy and Advocacy** will be achieved by building strong personal identity, self-esteem and emotional wellbeing. Autonomy is core to growth and resilience.
- **Choices and Influences**, using the prism of faith and personal values because good choices are achieved through being goal focused and having the strength and objectivity to assess whether a choice is congruent with one's values and goals. For

example, when making food choices, pupils will be considering kashrus (laws of kosher food) and their health needs.

- **Independence and Aspirations** are developed through building on personal strengths and values including those of faith. so as to become a well-adjusted and productive individual.

### 3. Context of our school

The school is Orthodox Jewish Charedi and serves families who are strictly orthodox in their Jewish practice. The School believes that RSE must be matched closely to the needs of the pupils and the prevailing attitudes and lifestyles that make up the school community.

Marriage is almost universal in our school community. It is undertaken as a religious Jewish ceremony, alongside which civil marriage takes place.

There is a well-developed, traditional education system within the community that prepares young people for intimacy and married life. This provision is conducted by a network of volunteer educators, who provide one-to-one classes to young men and women before marriage in the community, not within school. The majority of young people will participate in this provision, although some young people will be taught directly by their parents. Teaching covers the physiological details of reproduction and reproductive health, learning about relationships, and the requirements of Jewish and civil law. Typically, young people will continue to engage in ongoing reading or classes to learn about characteristics of strong and healthy respectful relationships, as a spouse, parent, child and a member of their family and their community. The goal is to create strong relationships, incorporating Torah guidelines on intimacy and other relationships, and to engender attitudes that contribute to positive long-term relationships

This community-based system has been in place and worked for the school community for many years. It is familiar, tried and tested, trusted by all and culturally appropriate

Our pupils attend a girls only school and have friendships with peers of the same sex. Their social interaction with young people of the opposite sex is within the family context. To date, our school has not experienced a teenage pregnancy and has not needed to have recourse to sexual health services.

The above information does not in any way take away our responsibility to give our young people the knowledge required to stay safe, but it provides important context for understanding why a culturally sensitive approach to RSE is most likely have the greatest impact on our young people.

When pupils reach us from primary school, they will be very aware of the importance of family and the people that care for them, of respectful relationships, and of keeping safe in different contexts, including digital safety.

As pupils grow through secondary school, we build upon and develop this learning. They will continue to learn about the concept of personal safeguarding, about the sanctity of

their bodies, and about harms that they may not inflict upon others and that that other may not inflict on them, both from a civil and Torah perspective.

We expect that parents at our school will wish to withdraw their children from those elements of the RSE requirements that relate to SE. Parents will favour the retention of the traditional community system that has served them well and that is consistent with their faith and culture. The school has therefore carefully designated which parts of RSE are classed as SE and from which parents may withdraw their children. This has been done in consultation with parents.

For pupils who are not withdrawn from SE, we have engaged the services of an external provider who will be able to teach all of areas of SE in a way that a) uses language and terminology that our pupils will understand and relate to, and b) remains, as much as possible, sensitive to parental wishes.

As per DfE guidance, RSE should be taught in a proportionate way to match the needs of the children and we will continue to monitor the student body so that our curriculum and approach remains suitable.

## 4. Underpinning Principles and Values of RSE at our school

This school believes RSE should:

- Promote the concept that the key quality to be sought of and respected in every person is the innate quality of humanity, which is of a Divine source. At the heart of this will be the Torah value to treat people with the same respect, the same regard and the same courtesy. On this basis pupils will learn to adopt that way of thinking, on which human happiness depends. Respect will be a core value throughout RSE. Pupils are expected to meet their duties of respect to all. In achieving this, the school deliberately minimises the focus on differences and instead emphasises universal similarities of 'tzelem elokim' – that all of humankind has a 'Divine' element that commands respect.
- Recognise that parents are *central* to RSE as the key people in teaching their children about relationships and growing up. The school strives for collaboration between home and school. We will consult with parents and ensure that they have information about RSE content, including what elements are mandatory and what sections they can withdraw their children from. The development of positive relationships depends fundamentally on consistent educational messages and personal example set by caregivers, parents and school.
- Develop independent choice and free will which is encapsulated by a core premise of Judaism called 'bechirah'. Young people face many choices as they are growing up and will face choices independently throughout their adult lives. True choice is when they can understand the range of options before them – without being influenced by stereotyping and prejudice.

- Take an optimal whole school approach whereby parents, staff and pupils (as appropriate) are engaged through consultation on RSE and the delivery of its curriculum.
- Incorporate schoolwide a classic Jewish pedagogic approach of 'Mussar' (character development) and 'derech erez' (societal norms of good behaviour, boundary setting). These will provide an important framework for virtues of respect, kindness, integrity, generosity and honesty.
- Expect our pupils to become מעורב בין הבריות - exemplifying social behaviours that are polite and respectful of all, irrespective of differences.
- Understand that parents and teachers need to take responsibility to demonstrate respectful relationships to each other, in all their social interactions and not least in their behaviours towards their children and young people.
- Encourage parents to demonstrate 'shalom bayis' - positive behaviour to each other, so that children learn and recognize mutually respectful, loving and caring relationships. They learn to recognize and value commitment and their family values.
- Expect our staff and teachers to show respect to each other and to pupils.  
יהי כבוד תלמידך חביב עליך כשלך אבות פרק ד - *May the dignity of your pupils be as precious to you as your own (Mishna Avoth ch 4)*
- Incorporate activities and learning to develop character virtues of self-control, which are at the core of considerate and mutually respectful relationships, including intimate relationships.
- Pupils will learn positive regard for disadvantaged groups through fundamental Torah teachings. This will challenge prejudicial assumptions.
- The Torah mandates particular sensitivity to disadvantaged groups (naming in particular widows, orphans and converts to Judaism). This will always be a consideration in delivery of RSE so that children from atypical circumstances will never feel stigmatised or less valued and will not stigmatise or discriminate against others.

## 5. Equality Requirements and Inclusivity

Pupils are expected to meet their duties of respect to all. In achieving this, the school deliberately minimizes focus on differences and rather emphasizes universal similarities of 'tzelem elokim' – all humankind has a 'Divine' element that commands respect.

Particular focus will be paid to children who have atypical family profiles including deceased parents, single parent families or blended families. The Torah specifically mandates that children who are orphaned of a parent be given additional support and sensitivity.

Our school takes full responsibility for all its pupils regardless of their differences, characteristics or needs.

Occasionally children will present with questions or situations which are atypical and potentially in conflict with Orthodox Jewish teachings (*these could include LGBT related matters, or other sexual social or behavioural matters*). It is our policy to recognise that children deserve and need answers and may be experiencing real inner conflict.

For example, a pupil may have a family structure which is atypical or have non-religious relatives, and she may see or learn about relationships which are rare in Orthodox Jewish society. Children may be asking about relationships or lifestyle which are not consonant with Torah principles. Our school believes that our role as educators is to respond individually to our pupils' specific experiences and questions. We aim to be responsive to their questions and feelings, not suppressive, and will do this through key, skilled pastoral support as part of the staffing structure. External relevant professionals will also be included for both mentoring of staff and direct teaching as appropriate and questions will often be dealt with on an individual basis rather than in a classroom context.

Should a young person (or their parent / carer) present with questions about understanding non hetero-sexual relationships, they will be able to request to meet with and gain guidance from the pastoral team or be signposted to an external agency that the school works with, that operates from a Torah perspective and in a way that is consistent with the school ethos.

We recognise the particular vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND. The knowledge and competences in RSE are essential for pupils with SEND to live fulfilled lives, to ensure they are safe and to prevent exploitation. SEND pupils will be fully integrated into the programme of RSE. Teachers will use differentiation where necessary, and SENDCOs will use IEPs to help pupils with SEND with RSE. The teaching of this subject will be sensitive to the individual needs of all pupils in the class, to avoid stereotyping, to prevent any possible embarrassment to SEND pupils, and to ensure that there is no discrimination towards any of the protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

## 6. Right of Withdrawal from SE

Parents / carers have the right to withdraw their child from sex education.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education or PSHE.

A request to withdraw a child should be made in writing on a form provided by the School. The Headteacher has the right to deny such requests, but in line with the School's approach to these matters, as explained in section 3, we do not expect the Headteacher to do so unless there are exceptional circumstances.

From 3 terms prior to a child turning 16, a child may directly request to receive SE rather than to be withdrawn. The school will then arrange for the child to receive a programme of SE during one of those terms. This will be delivered by our chosen SE provider (covering the



requirements from a Torah perspective) and the school remains responsible for appropriateness and quality of the provision.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### **Governing Body**

Responsibility for the RSE policy in our school ultimately lies with the governing body and there a representative of the governing body will be part of the working group that develops and reviews the RSE policy. The policy will be reviewed every two years and prior to that governors will consult with and monitor changes to the profile of the school parent body and make any necessary changes to ensure that the RSE policy remains up to date and relevant.

### **Executive Principal**

The Executive Principal takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, and the school management.

The Executive Principal has general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information required relating to RSE and the provision of in-service training as necessary.

### **Teachers**

RSE is a whole school issue and teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to deliver RSE in accordance with the Jewish ethos of the school.

### **Parent/ Carers**

As part of a whole school approach to RSE, parents will be expected to be an integral part of the working group, delivery and support of RSE.

Their attendance at workshops on parenting, child safety and technology risk will be pivotal in achieving some of the more sensitive and personalised elements of RSE.

## 8. Consultation

Our RSE policy and offer has been developed through in-depth work of a small group of school staff and parents. The views of parents have been fundamental in the shaping of the RSE policy.

The school will consult more widely with all parents on their wishes and for contributions about the shape of the RSE policy.

Regular review will also include consultation to ensure that parents' views, wishes and comments are being captured for monitoring and review purposes. This will ensure that the RSE policy is kept relevant and appropriate to the needs and developmental stages of the children.

## 9. The Content of RSE and Curriculum Design

We have fully mapped out RSE curriculum and how it will be delivered. The primary form of delivery will be in a weekly form period. In addition, we continue to reinforce many elements of the RSE curriculum in different subjects across the curriculum.

### **Delivery of SE and RSE and Personal Safety**

- RSE is mainly delivered through a weekly Mechanches Period (MP). This is a lesson with the form tutor geared at helping our pupils understand their place in the world and negotiate their relationships with others.
- Some elements of RSE (noted in the chart below) will be delivered during the MP session by teachers with particular specialisms. This includes the following modules: Citizenship Modules; E-safety Modules; Personal Safety Module.
- The elements of RSE that are classified as specifically SE will be delivered by an external provider (Darchey HaKodesh) to pupils whose parents have not requested that their child is withdrawn.
- Through our Personal Safety Workshops and our weekly Mechanches Period, we ensure that pupils who have been withdrawn from SE are nonetheless fully aware of the threat of harassment and predatory behaviour and are equipped with the knowledge and tools to keep them safe.

The chart below shows, which elements we have classified as specifically SE, which fall into the more general group of relationships education, how we deliver each element of the RSE curriculum and where we use an external provider.

RSE Topic	What RSE is required to deliver	Primary form of delivery.
FAMILIES AND THE PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR ME	<p>Pupils will have an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.</li> <li>• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</li> <li>• what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.</li> <li>• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.</li> <li>• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li> </ul>	<p><b>-MP (main curriculum)</b></p> <p><b>-MP (main curriculum)</b></p> <p><b>-MP (Citizenship module)</b></p> <p><b>-MP (Citizenship module)</b> <b>-Personal Safety Workshop 4</b></p> <p><b>-MP (Citizenship module)</b></p>
RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS INCLUDING FRIENDSHIPS	<p>Pupils will have an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ingredients and expectations positive and healthy friendships (including for example: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict)</li> <li>• the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li> <li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li> <li>• how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can</li> </ul>	<p><b>-Kodesh, main curriculum (Pirkei Ovos)</b> <b>-Mishmeres Programme</b></p> <p><b>-MP (main curriculum)</b></p> <p><b>-MP (main curriculum)</b></p> <p><b>-MP (main curriculum)</b></p>

<b>RSE Topic</b>	<b>What RSE is required to deliver</b>	<b>Primary form of delivery.</b>
	<p>cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people’s beliefs.</li> <li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</li> <li>• that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li> <li>• the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, based on the Equality Act 2010, and that everyone is unique and equal</li> <li>• what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>-MP (main curriculum)</b></p> <p><b>-TAG modules (in MP lesson)</b></p> <p><b>-Personal Safety Workshop 2</b></p> <p><b>-MP (Citizenship module)</b></p> <p><b>-External SE provider (Darchey HaKodesh)</b></p>
<b>ONLINE SAFETY</b>	<p>Pupils will have an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.</li> <li>• about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.</li> <li>• how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.</li> <li>• not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.</li> <li>• what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.</li> </ul>	<p><b>-TAG modules (in MP lesson)</b> <b>-IT curriculum</b></p> <p><b>-TAG modules (in MP lesson)</b> <b>-IT curriculum</b></p> <p><b>-TAG modules (in MP lesson)</b> <b>-IT curriculum</b></p> <p><b>-TAG modules (in MP lesson)</b> <b>-IT curriculum</b></p> <p><b>-TAG modules (in MP lesson)</b></p>

RSE Topic	What RSE is required to deliver	Primary form of delivery.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the impact of viewing harmful content.</li> <li>that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.</li> <li>that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.</li> </ul>	<p>-IT curriculum</p> <p>-TAG modules (in MP lesson)</p> <p>-MP (main curriculum)</p> <p>-External SE provider (Darchey HaKodesh)</p> <p>-External SE provider (Darchey HaKodesh)</p>
STAYING SAFE	<p>Pupils will have an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the concepts of, and laws relating to, 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.</li> <li>how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).</li> </ul>	<p>-Personal Safety Workshop 3</p> <p>-External SE provider (Darchey HaKodesh)</p> <p>-External SE provider (Darchey HaKodesh)</p>
INTIMATE AND SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS, INCLUDING	<p>Pupils will have an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and</li> </ul>	<p><b>All areas in this section will be delivered by our External SE provider (Darchey HaKodesh)</b></p> <p>(Note: general risks of alcohol and drugs covered in MP main</p>

RSE Topic	What RSE is required to deliver	Primary form of delivery.
	<p>the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.</li> <li>• that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</li> <li>• the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.</li> <li>• the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.</li> <li>• that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).</li> <li>• how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.</li> <li>• about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.</li> <li>• how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.</li> <li>• how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul>	<p>curriculum and science curriculum)</p>