

# Framework - Relationships and Sex Education

## Introduction

United Learning was established in 1883 to provide girls with an education that they were otherwise denied. 138 years later it's primarily the experience of girls in schools across the land that has prompted us to look again at the education we provide all pupils, and ensure that we leave nothing to chance in teaching about relationships and sex.

The purpose of this document is to provide practical guidance to schools, drawing on good practice from our trust and beyond. We have arranged this document in three sections:

- a) **Where are we now?** Resources to help schools self-assess their current provision for relationships and sex education.
- b) **Prevention:** Resources to help schools create the right culture, empower staff and teach an informative curriculum.
- c) **Response:** Resources to help schools respond to reports of sexual abuse.

This paper ends with links to key documents.

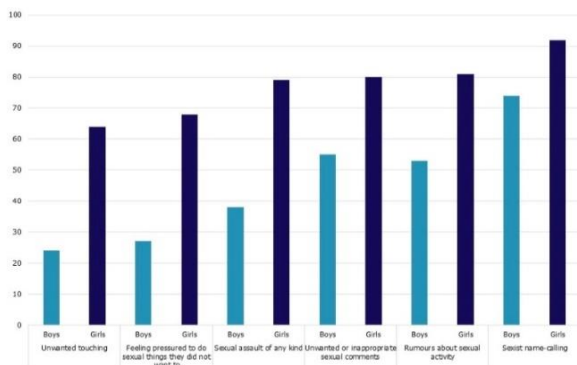
## Part A: Where are we now?

### Reminder of Key Points from Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools ([HERE](#))

- “Act as though sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening, even when there are no specific reports.”
- Children and young people were rarely positive about the relationships and sex education they had received. They felt that it was too little, too late, and that the curriculum was not equipping them with the information and advice they needed to navigate the reality of their lives.
- Older children report a more negative experience than younger children e.g. “54% of those aged 16 and above said unwanted touching occurred a lot or sometimes, compared with 40% of 13- to 15-year-olds.” – see graphs below
- Girls have a much more negative experience than boys – see graphs below
- The report noted curriculum challenges e.g lack of space in timetable, lack of specialist teachers, lack of teacher confidence, poor subject knowledge, gaps in curriculum coverage, lack of adaptation for age, poor resources, in-school variation.

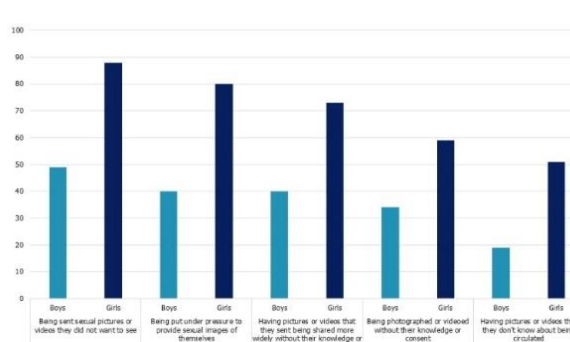


**Figure 2. These things happen ‘a lot’ or ‘sometimes’ between people my age (%)**



	Boys	Girls
Unwanted touching	24	64
Feeling pressured to do sexual things they did not want to	27	68
Sexual assault of any kind	38	79
Unwanted or inappropriate sexual comments	55	80
Rumours about sexual activity	53	81
Sexist name-calling	74	92

**Figure 3. These things happen ‘a lot’ or ‘sometimes’ between people my age (%)**



	Boys	Girls
Being sent sexual pictures or videos they did not want to see	49	88
Being put under pressure to provide sexual images of themselves	40	80
Having pictures or videos that they sent being shared more widely without their knowledge or consent	40	73
Being photographed or videoed without their knowledge or consent	34	59
Having pictures or videos that they don't know about being circulated	19	51

## Student Survey

In June 2021 we launched a student survey to gain a snapshot of the experiences of our pupils across our schools. This survey closed on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021 but schools can access the questions and adapt for their own context through this link [HERE](#).

Analysis of our group results can be found as an annex to this paper.

## Focus Groups

Running focus groups with selected students can help gain a deeper understanding of the points raised in the student survey and provide a chance to explore the themes relevant to each school. The Ofsted review into sexual abuse in schools shared the following points about its own methodology, which might be useful for schools running their own focus groups:

- Colouring in/marking areas on a map of their school according to how safe/unsafe parts of the school were, discussing this among the group as they did so (see more on hotspot mapping below).
- Answering a short questionnaire about the prevalence of sexual abuse among their peers and who they would speak to, if anyone, if they were the victim of abuse or harassment (we did this with those in Year 9 and above only).
- Choosing from 4 scenarios to use to talk hypothetically about what might be said/done among their peer group in different situations, as well as who they might speak to/tell.

- Explaining what they are taught in school/college about relationships and sex and whether they thought it was enough/well taught.

## Case Study – Safeguarding Girls and Educating Boys at Sedgehill Academy

### Lucy Oragano, Vice Principal

*Following the murder of Sarah Everard, I ran a CPD session for all staff on “Safeguarding girls”. The whole point was that it’s not about safeguarding girls - it’s about education of boys - how do they perceive girls and women, what language do they use and how can we change this? Also - how do we ‘educate’ girls on what they are entitled to? We outlined how we all need to take responsibility for educating boys.*

*I ran an assembly for all students looking at where sexism begins and gendered assumptions - I showed a clip of my son (age 7) who spoke of girls being silly and not strong. Although it made students laugh - I then referred to how society shapes us to think girls are weaker.*

*At the same time we ran some ‘girls discussion groups’ with female members of staff. Discussions on Sarah Everard, Everyone’s Invited, language and experiences. These were hugely successful and we had excellent uptake. They have since continued and we plan to do some boys ones too. I used some of the quotes from the girls in the CPD for staff above.*

*We then planned and ran a series of single sex assemblies that explored misogyny, language and how we move forward. We made a pledge to the students of the actions we will take as a school. The assemblies tackled “banter” that is harmful, the facts about women in the workplace and also defined sexual harassment.*

*We also:*

- *Placed a box in our inclusion centre, whereby students can report any sexual abuse or harassment.*
- *Ensured we had a ‘behaviour point’ on Arbor for sexual harassment.*
- *Asked all staff to complete the UK Feminista training on “What is Sexual Harassment?” They had to write their own action plan based on this.*
- *Placed posters around the school that tackled sexist language and negative views of women/girls.*

*Our next steps include:*

- *Single sex assemblies tackling discrimination further.*
- *Themed assemblies*
- *PSHE curriculum mapped across the school.*
- *Overhaul of the PSHE curriculum to ensure we cover more on the above.*
- *CPD sessions for staff on the collective language we use on sexism. We will discuss “the line we draw,” on certain language to address situations.*
- *Equalities working party.*

## Hotspot Mapping

Hot Spot Mapping can help establish how safe students feel in different parts of the school building and grounds. This can be used by schools to develop an action plan to tackle specific areas, such as through installation of CCTV, better lighting, or more supervision.



The Contextual Safeguarding Network gives a useful guide to how schools can approach hot spot mapping, as well as a framework against which schools can self-evaluate how effectively they prevent harmful sexual behaviours in their setting. These can be found [HERE](#).

## Case Study – Focus Groups at Midhurst Rother College, Summer 2021

### **Stuart Edwards, Principal:**

*“We started this process with an assembly on the murder of Sarah Everard and the Everyone’s Invited website. The assembly emphasised the right of women to feel safe at all times.*

*We followed this up with a focus group, taking a small group of students to represent a cross-section of students and year groups. The focus group for this was all girls. I asked our DSL to talk to them, as she has a great relationship with the students and also she could follow-up afterwards if she felt she needed to from a safeguarding perspective. One of our pastoral leaders also took part in this. We use the following questions as prompts for discussion:*

- 1. Talk to me about what it means to be a part of the MRC community.*
- 2. What do you understand by sexualised language / behaviour? What does this mean to you?*
- 3. In your time at MRC have you ever been made to feel uncomfortable by others (relating to sexualised behaviour?) What sorts of scenarios?*
- 4. Have you ever heard what you consider to be sexualised comments directed at you? If so, could you describe the context and what was said?*
- 5. How did it make you feel?*
- 6. Have you ever heard what you consider to be sexualised comments / actions directed at someone else at MRC? If so, could you describe the context and what was said?*
- 7. How did it make you feel hearing this directed at someone else?*
- 8. Have you ever felt uncomfortable or unsafe walking to / from school, or around the school?*
- 9. What more do you feel MRC can do to make things better?*
- 10. Anything else?*

*The points about feeling unsafe were directly linked to Sarah Everard. I asked the students in assembly to consider how they feel and they might make others feel when they are simply walking behind a woman or girl. For that assembly, I used quotes from female staff – some of it quite shocking. We received positive comments from parents on this.*

*The questions were used as a guide and it was more free-flowing than simple question and answers. I wanted to get the ‘how I feel when someone says / does X to me / others.’ The assembly when it was done focussed on “Education not Blame”. We didn’t want to blame anyone, but want them to understand how their actions impact others in order that they stop and think about it what they are saying and doing. We also push in assemblies and tutor time that we all have a moral responsibility to pass information on if we hear or see it, under the banner of peer on peer abuse. The message is: you cannot turn a blind eye to this and if you are in a group of boys and someone is making sexualised comments, you have an obligation to tell us in confidence.*

*We are covering peer on peer abuse in assemblies every two weeks, with a different topic in between to break it up. The tutor programme then follows up on the themes covered in the assembly.”*

## Part B: Prevention



## Whole School Culture

Prevention starts with a caring whole-school culture and simple lines of communication which set clear expectations and make it safe to speak out. The case study below sets out how one of our schools has gone about this.

### Case Study – ‘Telling School’ Ethos at Northampton Academy

#### Chris Clyne, Principal:

*“At Northampton Academy, we have a ‘telling school’ ethos that makes a point to believe students until any allegations are proven not to be true, and this is constantly reinforced with parents and students via the [website](#), newsletters and assemblies. Students can tell staff, or student wellbeing leaders, but there are also anonymous mechanisms like ‘dropboxes’ around school for them to leave written reports in, or the ‘sharp system’ on our website. All of this is about making it easy and routine for students to tell us about problematic behaviour or anything they’re concerned about. This means prevention is embedded and counteracts the issue some areas may have faced related to a reluctance by the community not wanting to give names either because they don’t want other students to get into trouble or because they worry about the consequences for them/their children.*

*In line with this, we’ve learnt the importance of protecting/supporting the alleged perpetrator as well as the alleged victim, particularly while the investigation is ongoing. We recently had a student who had been the subject of an accusation that later turned out not to have any substance, but exposed that student to some inappropriate behaviour from their peers. I saw it as our responsibility to support them and deal with the behaviour while making sure that the alleged victim also felt protected.*

*As a Head, I feel it is important to give staff the time to get to know our students. Our non-teaching learning managers have played a crucial role in this and are able to pick up on a lot of what is going on around school in a way that might be more difficult for schools with a different structure. Training is offered for all teachers in delivering the more sensitive parts of the RSE curriculum, particularly in KS4. All Y10 tutors are trained by Senior Leader Carlington Anderson. We feel that no teacher should feel uncomfortable teaching these topics and if they do, Carlington, the DSL and Deputy DSL are all ready to step in if necessary.*

*In terms of following up on actions, we use a tracker similar to a behaviour log. Each incident is recorded and investigated (generally by the DSL or Deputy DSL), with key actions e.g. informing parents (in all cases), police, wellbeing support, trauma assist (an LA service), a risk assessment (in every case), welfare checks (on alleged victim and alleged perpetrator – after 2 weeks and after 4 weeks). They aim to resolve all cases within 6 weeks and will always report back to parents. It is so important to close the feedback loop with parents, even if the investigation suggests that the allegations were untrue. All of that is designed to make follow-up completed routine and systematic.”*

#### Training for Staff and Governors

Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) sets out what all staff should know and do to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We quote from paragraph 13 here:

“All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

- child protection policy, which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with peer on peer abuse



- behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct)
- safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of this document should be provided to all staff at induction.”

Ashford School use online resources and MS Forms to ensure that all staff engage with key information. [This MS Form](#) for example asked staff questions based on the school’s Child Protection Policy. Staff were also asked to watch this [video on Sexual Development and Sexually Harmful Behaviour](#) produced by our Safeguarding Lead, Frazer Smith, and answer questions in [this MS form](#). Finally, staff were asked to read this [Sexual Behaviour Traffic Light Tool](#) from the charity ‘Brook’.

## Curriculum

We hope to take work forward in 21-22 to develop a United Learning PSHE curriculum which would include RSE within that. Ahead of that work, the Group’s Relationship and Sex Education guidance [HERE](#) details the topics that must be covered by the end of the secondary school. For ease of reference, they are also set out below.

<p><b>Families</b></p>	<p>Pupils should know:</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 and civil partnerships are, including their legal status e.g. that marriage and civil partnerships carry 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> <li>▪ The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to the raising of children.</li> <li>▪ How to: determine whether peers, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others’ relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.</li> </ul>
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<b>Respectful relationships including friendships</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (both on and offline) including: trust, respect, honesty, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li> <li>▪ How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).</li> <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 tolerance and respect to others and others' beliefs, including people in positions of authority.</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>▪ What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.</li> <li>▪ The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.</li> </ul>
<b>Online and media</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply online and offline.</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>▪ 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> <li>▪ The impact of viewing harmful content.</li> <li>▪ That specifically sexually explicit material often 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> <li>▪ How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.</li> </ul>
<b>Being Safe</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</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 (on and offline).</li> </ul>
<b>Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</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> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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 the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.</li> <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 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>▪ How 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>
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Sheffield Springs Academy have produced the following diagram to show how this content is taught over the 5 years of secondary school [HERE](#).

## Relationships and Sex Education in the United Learning Curriculum

United Learning subject advisers in the following subjects have identified where in their curriculum the above issues are touched upon:

### English (content listed below in the order it appears in grid above)

- **Year 9 Relationships and identity Non-Fiction Unit:** Students read, and respond to, three articles about equal marriage. Students also explore the potentially damaging effects of gender stereotypes in the unit's anchor text 'We should all be feminists'.
- **Year 8 Social Justice Non-Fiction unit:** The fact that there are different types of committed, stable relationships is explored through the extract from 'Why be happy when you can be normal?' which is written from the perspective of a gay female writer.
- **Year 7 Wolves of Willoughby Chase/ Girl of Ink and Stars:** In both units, students discuss and explore the positives and challenges of friendships, including the impact of external factors.
- **Year 8 Social Justice Poetry:** In the poem 'Door', students look at the difficulty, and importance, of challenging society's expectations of women. In the poem 'In My Country', the students explore the damage that ignorant and racist attitudes can cause in society.
- **Year 8 Social Justice Non-Fiction unit:** Students read, and respond to, articles about British civil rights activists. In the essay 'You can't say that! Stories have to be about white people', students discuss the importance of representation. Through the article 'Transgender stories: people think we wake up and decide to be trans', students explore the different experiences of transgender people and the challenges they can face.





- **Year 9 Short Stories unit:** Through the stories 'Games at Twilight' and the extract from 'The Black Flamingo', students explore the limitations of traditional expectations in regard to gender and masculinity.
- **Year 9 Relationships and Identity Poetry:** Through the reading of the poem, students discuss the potentially damaging effects of the limitations placed on women in a patriarchal society.

#### Science (content listed below in the order it appears in grid above)

- **7BR Reproduction:** The facts about pregnancy (NB that we don't cover miscarriage here, only the stages of pregnancy from fertilisation to birth)
- **8BD Nutrition and digestion, 9BB Biological systems and processes and B2 (Y10) Organisation:** The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining and healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health
- **B1 (Y9) Cell Biology, B2 (Y10) Organisation and B6 Inheritance and selection:** About the science relating to blood, organ, and stem cell donation
- **8BD Nutrition and digestion, 9BB Biological systems and processes, B2 (yr10) Organisation:** How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer (NB tooth decay is not covered in the science curriculum).
- **9BB Biological systems and processes:** The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions (NB mental health risks not covered, focus is on smoking and alcohol; specific risks of illegal drugs not covered in depth [e.g. cocaine, heroin etc])
- **9BB Biological systems and processes:** The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption in adulthood
- **9BB Biological systems and processes:** The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so
- **Year 10 B1 Cell biology, Year 10 B3 Infection and response:** About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics
- **10 B3 Infection and response:** The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination
- **7BR Reproduction and variation and Year 11 B5 Homeostasis:** Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing (NB menstrual well being not covered in 7BR unit, just key biological facts about puberty; hormonal role in menstrual cycle covered in year 11 unit)
- **7BR Reproduction and variation:** The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health (NB implications for emotional and physical health not specified - only description of key changes).
- **B3 Infection and Response (year 10):** How prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. 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 (NB only HIV and Gonorrhoea are covered – method of spread, symptoms, prevention, and treatment – as examples of viral and bacterial STIs respectively).

#### PE (NB the exact place in the PE curriculum where the following points are touched on will depend on the the PE curriculum delivered in each school):

- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships including trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.



- How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- 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
- The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness
- The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining and healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health
- How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer

**RE (content listed below in the order it appears in grid above)**

- **GCSE:**
  - That there are different types of committed stable relationships
  - How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children
  - 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
  - Why marriage is an important relationships choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into
  - The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
  - The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting
  - 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.
- **Year 9, Issues of Equality:**
  - How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
  - 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.
- **Year 9, Extremism:**
  - 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 materials placed online
- **GCSE:**
  - 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
  - That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
  - The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy, and options available



- 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)
- **Year 9, Extremism:**
  - Similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image for their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online

## Communication with Parents

[DFE statutory guidance](#) provides useful advice on engaging with parents:

- “The role of parents in the development of their children’s understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.
- All schools should work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.
- Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school’s approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.
- Many schools build a good relationship with parents on these subjects over time – for example by inviting parents into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. This can be an important opportunity to talk about how these subjects contribute to wider support in terms of pupil wellbeing and keeping children safe. It is important through such processes to reach out to all parents, recognising that a range of approaches may be needed for doing so.
- Many schools will have existing mechanisms in place to engage parents and should continue to draw on these as they respond to the new legal framework.”

Surveys of parents can also help gain an understanding of what is happening in your school and what further support parents and children need. A template parent survey, along with guidance, can be found on the Contextual Safeguarding Network website [HERE](#).

Leaders at Sheffield Springs Academy recently held an online ‘town hall’ meeting which gave parents the chance to ask any questions about the school’s Relationships and Sex Education Policy. Following a short summary of the policy, the agenda was deliberately left open to encourage questions from parents.

The DFE document ‘[Parental Engagement on Relationships Education](#)’ provides further guidance, along with case studies, on engaging parents with relationships education.

## Part C: Response



Students are more likely to report concerns when they feel safe and supported in doing so. Fears around social implications and the risk of being rejected or ostracised by a peer group come through as significant causes of concern for students in Ofsted's report. The Northampton case study above provides a good example of a school explicitly making it safe and simple to share concerns.

The DFE document [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) provides detailed guidance on how to respond to reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

“The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the schools or college's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- The ages of the children involved;
- The developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- Is the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse?
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff?
- Other related issues and wider context.”

**In September 2021 the UL Central Office will be publishing an operational toolkit for schools, which will include:**

- A flow chart/process map for dealing with alleged incidents of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children. Linking each stage of the process to statutory guidance.
- Practical guidance on supporting the school community.
- Key contacts in UL who can support schools with different parts of the process.
- A reporting template to provide guidance on how alleged incidents should be recorded and the criteria for how an alleged incident is classified.

## Further Reading and Resources

- Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges, June 2021 [HERE](#)
- Link to Summer 2021 United Learning Sex and Relationships Education Pupil Survey (editable version for schools to duplicate) [HERE](#)
- The Contextual Safeguarding Network resources on hot spot mapping, as well as a framework against which schools can self-evaluate how effectively they prevent harmful sexual behaviours in their setting [HERE](#).
- Northampton Academy website page with information on 'telling school' culture and sharp system [HERE](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (July 2021) [HERE](#)
- Ashford School's MS Form to ensure that all staff have read the school's Child Protection Policy [HERE](#)



- Video on [Sexual Development and Sexually Harmful Behaviour](#) produced by our Safeguarding Lead, Frazer Smith
- Brook's [Sexual Behaviour Traffic Light Tool](#)
- United Learning Relationship and Sex Education guidance [HERE](#) based on DFE Statutory Requirements [HERE](#)
- Sheffield Springs Academy's diagram to show how this content is taught over the 5 years of secondary school [HERE](#).
- The DFE document [Parental Engagement on Relationships Education](#)
- DFE document 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges: Advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (May 2018)' [HERE](#)

## Annex - Relationships and Sex Education – Group-wide Results Analysis

### Introduction

Following the publication of Ofsted's [Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges](#) United Learning formed a small working group of Headteachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads to consider what action we should take as a Group to tackle issues of sexual abuse and sexual harassment in our schools. As part of that work, we carried out a student survey, to hear from our students their views on the provision of Relationships and Sex Education and experience of inappropriate behaviour in school and in their communities. The (anonymous) survey ran from 25 June to 9 July.

This note summarises the findings at a Group level.

### Responses

In total, **6217** students responded to the survey, across **35** schools (34 academies and 1 independent school), 24 of which had more than 100 respondents.<sup>1</sup>

Just over half (**57%**) of the responses are from female students.

There are a total of **2,211** substantive free-text comments in response to the survey.<sup>2</sup> Female respondents are more likely than male respondents to have added free-text comments to their responses (**62%** of the comments are from female respondents).

Over half of respondents are in either Year 9 or Year 10, with just over a third of respondents in Year 7 or Year 8.

Details of responses by school and by year group are at Annex A.

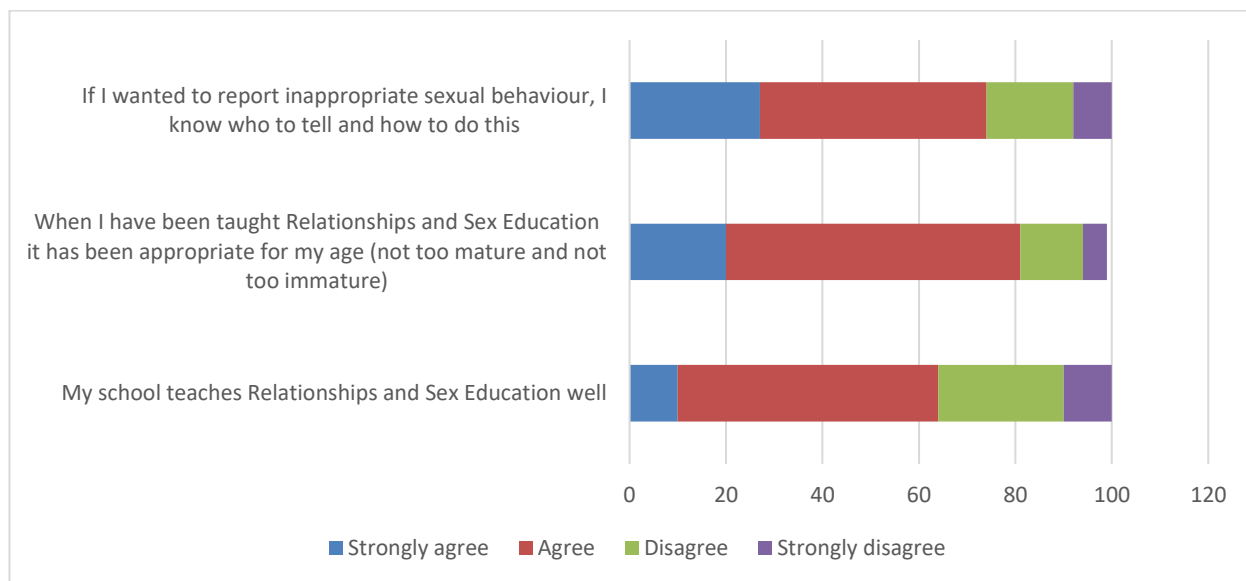
<sup>1</sup> The timing of the survey coincided with the last week or so of term for our independent schools. Given the sensitive nature of the issues raised and the fact that timely follow-up with students would be difficult, most decided not to run the survey with their students.

<sup>2</sup>



## Overall views of Relationships and Sex Education

Most respondents are positive about their experience of RSE and are confident that they know what to do if they experience inappropriate sexual behaviour.



However, a significant proportion (**42%**) of the substantive free-text comments left in response to this section refer to students' perception that they had received no, or barely any, relationships and sex education since starting secondary school. This is the case for 46% of the Year 7 and Year 10 free-text responses, 55% of the Year 8 free-text responses and 35% of the Year 9 free-text responses; there are even a small number of Year 12 students whose free-text comments suggest they have had no or little relationships and sex education.

A further **19%** of the substantive free text comments relate to respondents' desire for more relationships and sex education, either in general or on specific topics (for example, consent and LGBTQ+ issues), or their view that the content was not appropriate for their age.

**11%** of responses to this section indicate a lack of confidence in how the school would respond if inappropriate sexual behaviour were reported.

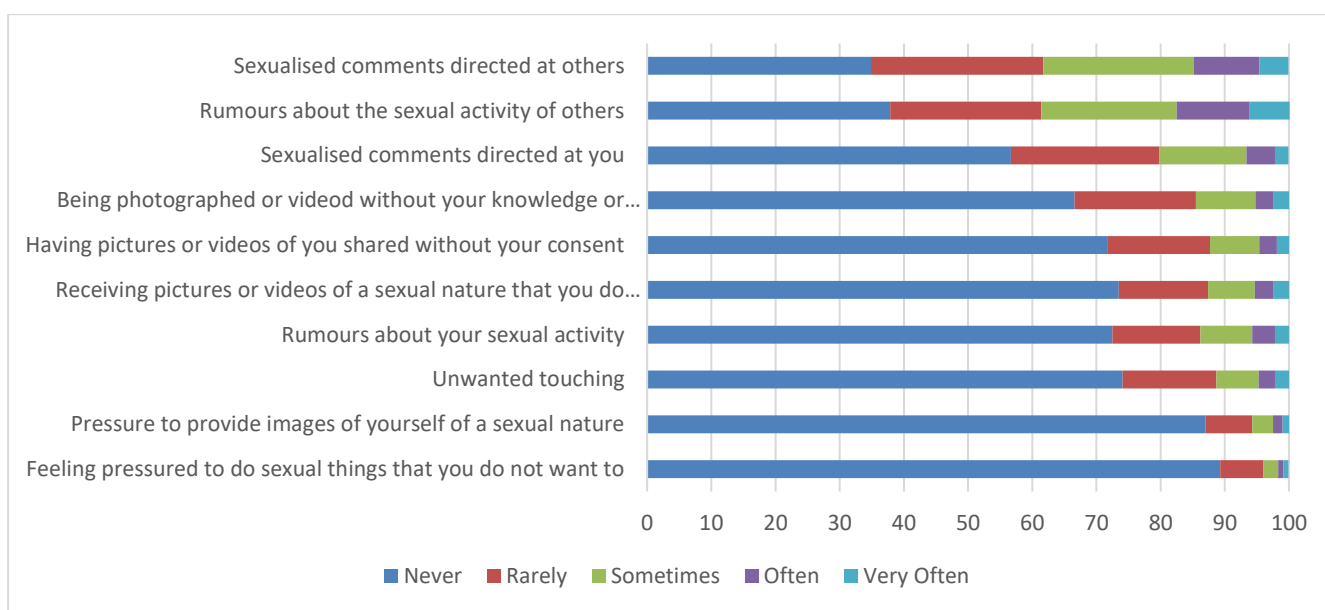




## Experience of inappropriate behaviour – in school

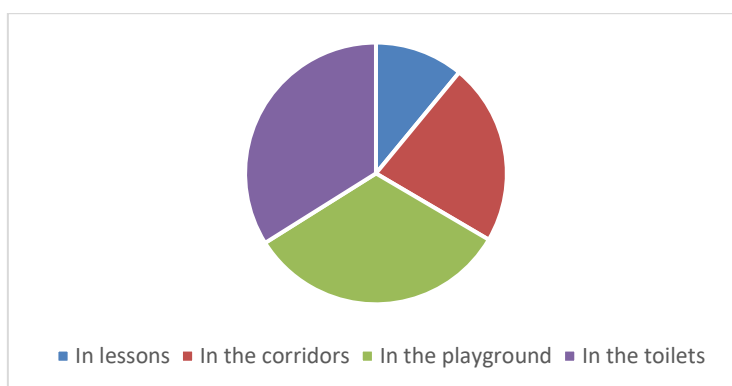
The most commonly reported inappropriate behaviour is that directed at others, whether sexualised comments or rumours about others’ sexual activity.

Although relatively rare, it is extremely worrying that just over 100 students in our schools report being pressured to do sexual things that they do not want to and just over 150 students report experiencing pressure to provide images of themselves of a sexual nature, either ‘often’ or ‘very often’. The vast majority of students in both groups are female (pressure to share images: 83% female; pressure to do sexual things: 68% female). Around 40% of students reporting being pressured to do either of these things ‘often’ or ‘very often’ are in Years 7-9.



The largest groupings of substantive free text comments in response to this section making reference to specific behaviours refer to inappropriate comments (16%), sharing of pictures (14%) and unwanted touching (12%), often noting that the behaviour may be accidental, between friends or not of a sexual nature. 6% of the substantive free-text comments refer to this activity being simply ‘banter’ or jokes between friends (female respondents are as likely to say this as male respondents).

Two-thirds of respondents think that inappropriate behaviour in school is most likely to be experienced or witnessed in the toilets or in the playground.



However, free-text comments in response to this section suggest that a number of respondents were either guessing or randomly selecting a response. (44% of substantive free-text comments suggested the respondent would have either chosen to skip the question or select ‘nowhere’ had that been an option.)

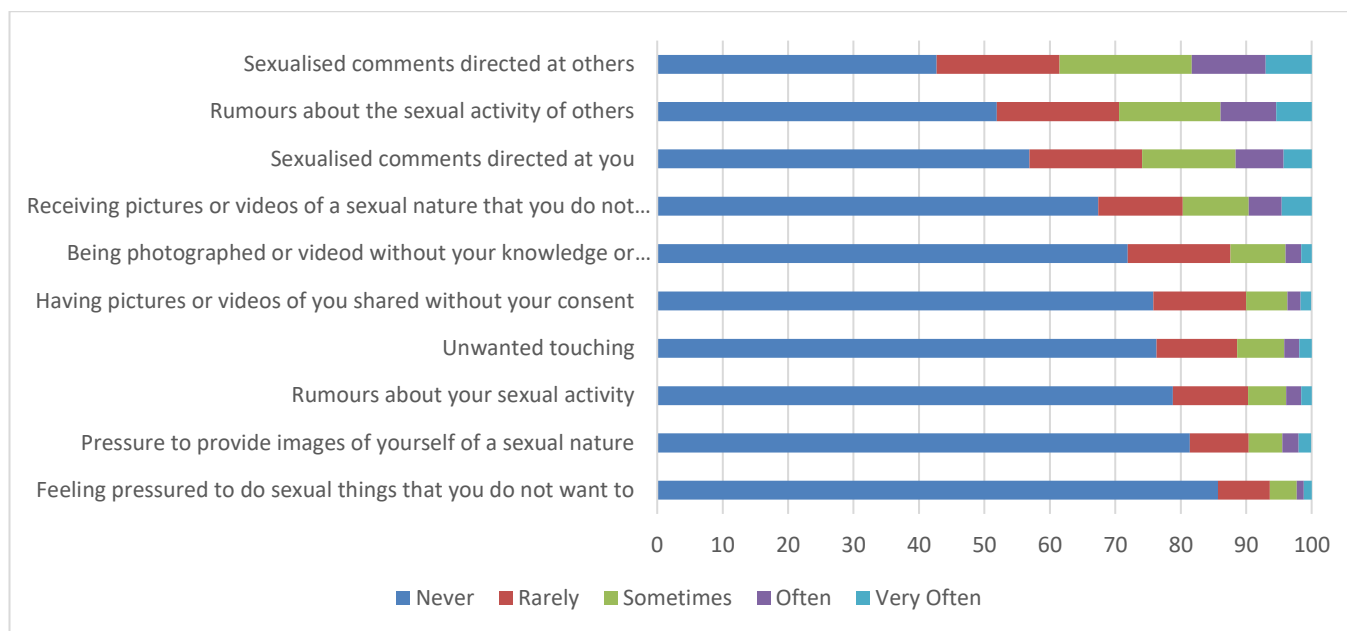


Around **10%** of substantive free-text comments noted either that inappropriate behaviour can happen anywhere, or that it is most likely to occur in spaces that are not supervised by teachers.

### Experience of inappropriate behaviour – outside school

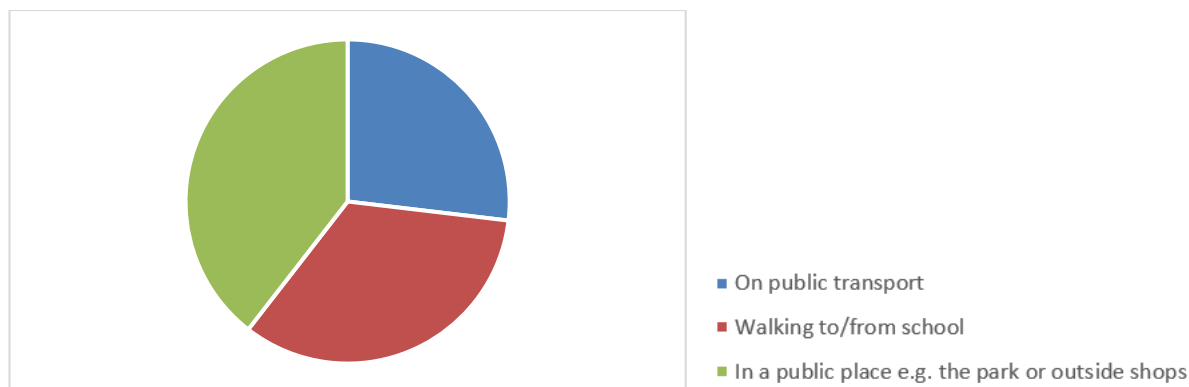
The pattern is broadly the same outside of school. While students are slightly less likely to report some activity outside of school than in school (for example, hearing sexualised comments directed at others and rumours about others’ sexual activity) most of the examples of behaviour are more likely to be experienced by our students outside of school.

Outside of school, 142 students (**77%** female) report being pressured to do sexual things they do not want to and 278 students (**90%** female) report being pressured to share images of themselves of a sexual nature, either ‘often’ or ‘very often’.



The substantive free text comments in response to this section are rather more wide-ranging, with the highest proportion (**32%**) referring to respondents never having experienced any of these inappropriate behaviours outside of school. Where respondents do refer to specific behaviours, it most often relates to inappropriate comments (**14.5%**, with ‘catcalling’ mentioned in a number of comments).

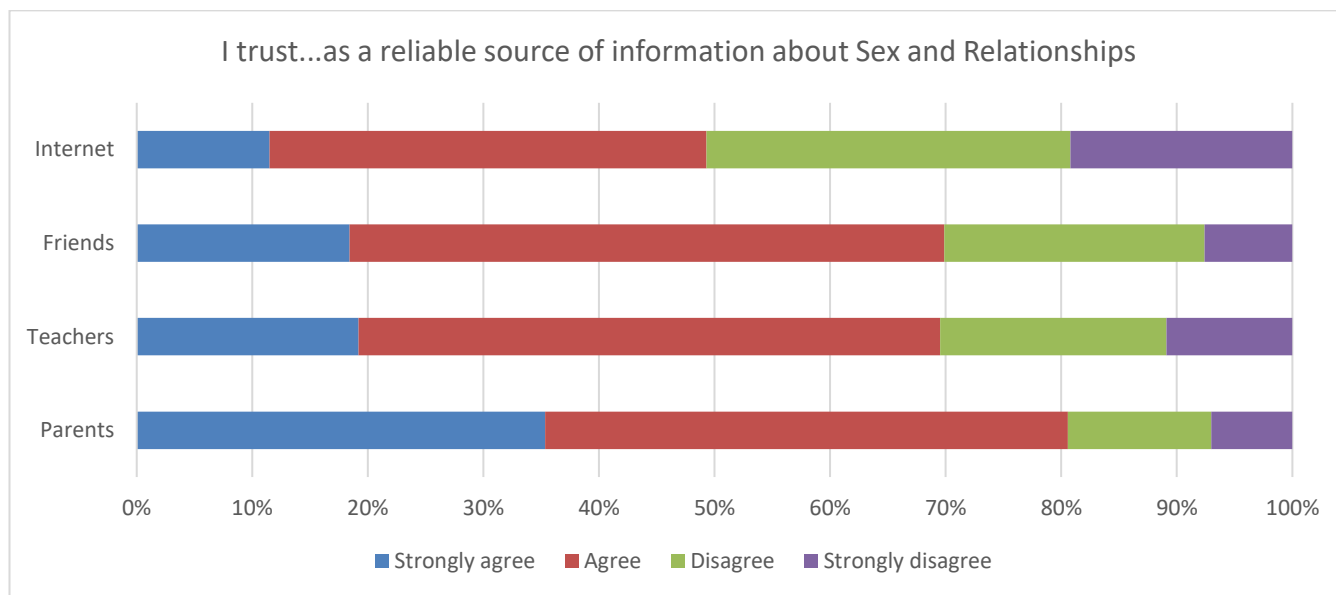
Nearly three-quarters of students think that they are most likely to experience or witness inappropriate behaviour outside school either when walking to school or in a public place.



As with behaviours in school, free-text comments suggest that ‘nowhere’ may have been a popular option (51% of free-text responses making the point to this effect). However, the proportion of substantive free-text comments referring to streets and public places (14%) compared to that referring to transport (6%) supports the broad pattern indicated by students’ choice of options.

### Sources of information about relationships and sex

Students report being most trusting of their parents, with teachers and friends broadly attracting the same level of trust. The internet is the least trusted source of information, although it is still trusted by around 50% of respondents. Just under 240 respondents across the survey as a whole (4%) either ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ that any of these are reliable sources of information about sex and relationships.

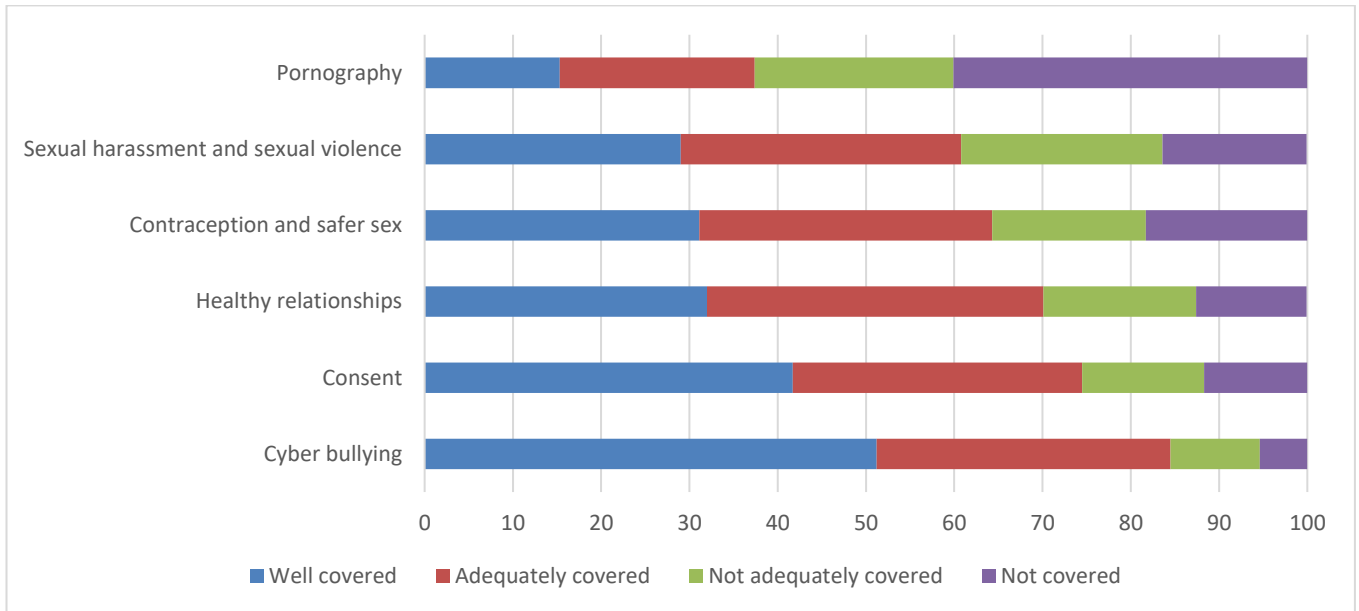


The largest grouping of substantive free-text comments in response to this section relates to the internet/social media, with some respondents noting that its reliability as a source of information depends on the website being accessed.

### Coverage of specific topics

A majority of students feel that the topics highlighted in the survey are either adequately or well covered. The exception is pornography, about which only 40% of students felt this. (The vast majority of respondents who say pornography has not been covered are in Years 7-9 and some of the free-text comments suggest that younger respondents may not have been familiar with the term or know what it is.)



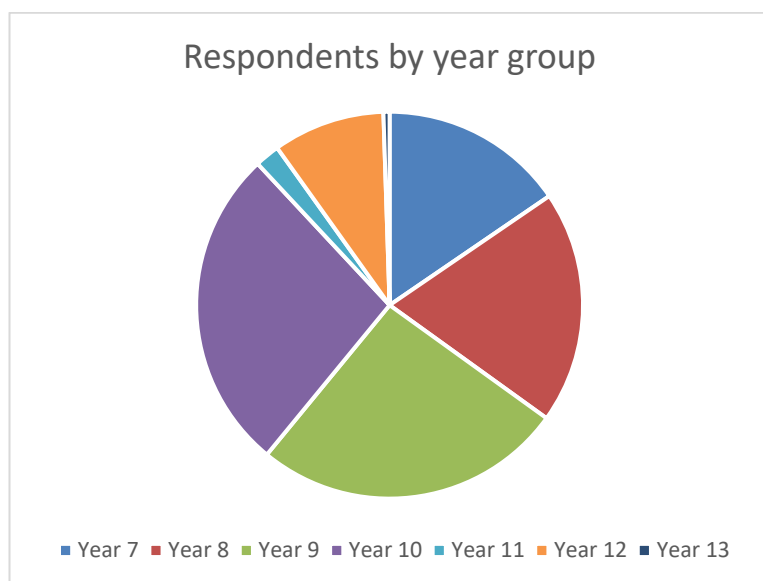
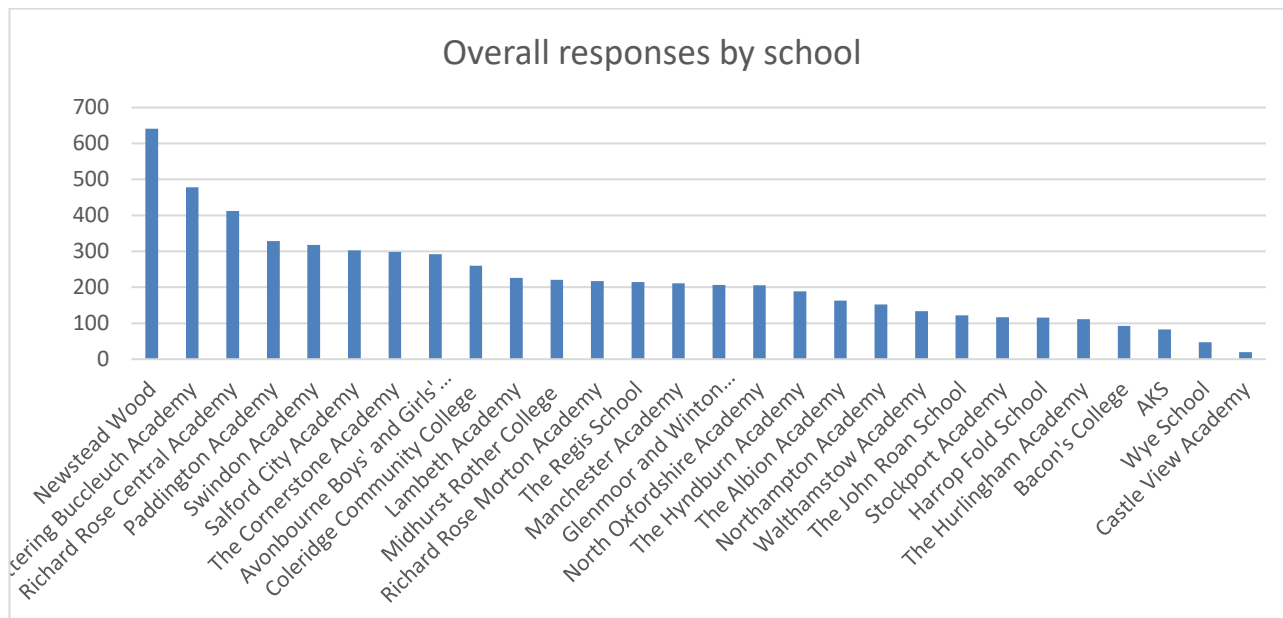


Over two-thirds (**35%**) of the substantive free-text comments in response to this section relate either to respondents view that they have had little or no relationships and sex education in secondary school or to their wish to have more teaching across these areas, echoing comments in response to the first set of questions.



## ANNEX A – DETAILS OF RESPONDENTS

The charts below shows overall responses for all those schools with more than 20 respondents and the breakdown of responses by year group. (Other responses as follows: Accrington – 8; Barnsley – 1; Nova Hreod – 1; Parkside – 6; Seahaven – 1; Shoreham – 12; WHGS – 1; Other – 6.)<sup>3</sup>



Year Group	Responses
Year 7	961
Year 8	1211
Year 9	1617
Year 10	1685
Year 11	129
Year 12	582
Year 13	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6217</b>

<sup>3</sup> The 'other' responses were attributed to CAST. However, as the survey was not shared with CAST students, and as respondents choosing CAST as their school included some in Year 7 and Year 8 (which are year groups CAST does not have) we assume this selection was in error.

