

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy was drawn up with guidance from the '*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education*' (England) statutory guidance 2025, made under sections 34 and 35 of the '*Children and Social Work Act*' 2017.
- 1.1.1 It is compulsory for all secondary schools to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and compulsory for all primary schools to provide Relationship Education.
- 1.1.2 It is compulsory for all schools, including academies and free schools, but not Independent schools, to provide Health Education. However, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) continue to be compulsory in Independent schools.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
- Child Protection Policy with appendices
 - Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Safe Use of Technology Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Behaviour and Discipline Policy
 - SEND Policy

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 RSE makes an essential and significant contribution to safeguarding children and young people during their school-age years and into the future. RSE should enable young people to develop skills and confidence to access professional advice and appropriate health services. It enables children to understand their physical and emotional development and enable young people to take increasing responsibility for their own health and well-being and that of others.
- 2.2 Health education is not covered within this policy because it is covered elsewhere in the school's curriculum and policies.
- 2.3 We work in partnership with parents, carers and pupils and welcome feedback and discussion of our RSE policy. The scheme of work for each year group is shared and parents and carers are formally offered the opportunity to discuss provision at the start of each academic year. Parents/carers may request to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, but only after discussion with the Headteacher or Deputy Head Pastoral, who will respect the parents/carers' wishes if they continue to hold that view after discussion.
- 2.4 However, parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under national curriculum science.
- 2.5 From the Vs, if the student wishes to receive sex education, then the school will make arrangements to provide it within the next three terms and the parents/carers have no right to appeal against that decision.
- 2.6 This policy and the scheme of work is available on the school's website and, while the school chooses how to deliver the subject, guidance offered by the Department for Education (DfE) has been considered.

- 2.7 When planning the teaching of RSE the school has considered the religious background of all students and reflects what the law allows and does not allow.
 - 2.8 The school is mindful to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage or vulnerability of any of our students under the SEND code of practice when planning RSE lessons. Also, teachers try hard not to discriminate against any students because of any 'protected characteristics' under the 'Equality Act' 2010 (i.e. age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or sexual orientation).
 - 2.9 The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. RSE is carried out principally within the personal, social and health and economic education (PSHEE) programme (see **Appendix 1** and **2**).
- 3. Guiding principles for relationship, sex and health education as set out by the statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education July 2025:**
- 3.1 **Engagement with pupils** – an inclusive and well-sequenced RSHE curriculum should be informed by meaning engagement with pupils to ensure the curriculum is relevant and engaging.
 - 3.2 **Engagement and transparency with parents** – to engage with parents on the content of RSHE and be transparent with parents about all materials used. All materials should be available to parents.
 - 3.3 **Positivity** – the focus should be on building positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships, including sexual relationships where relevant, and about health, including mental health.
 - 3.4 **Careful sequencing** – statutory topics to be covered, recognising that young people can start developing healthy relationships, including sexual relationships where relevant, and about health, including mental health.
 - 3.5 **Relevant and responsive** – the curriculum focus is to be relevant, age and stage appropriate and accessible to pupils in their area, where appropriate working with local partners and bodies on specific topics.
 - 3.6 **Skilled delivery of participative education** – the curriculum is to be delivered by school staff. External providers must have the knowledge, skills and confidence to create a safe and supportive environment and to facilitate participative and interactive education with aims to support and not alarm pupils.
 - 3.7 **Whole school approach** – the curriculum is best delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships, supported by other school policies, including behaviour and safeguarding policies.

4. OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The overall aims of the School's RSE curriculum are to provide accurate information about, and understanding of, RSE issues;
- 4.2 To create an atmosphere where questions and discussion on RSE matters take place without embarrassment;
- 4.3 To develop respect for each other as individuals, and to encourage both genders to understand one another;
- 4.4 Pupils develop the confidence to communicate and reflect on their feelings about RSE;

- 4.5 Understand the importance of respect, trust, love and intimacy in relationships;
- 4.6 To appreciate the value of family life, marriage and the implications of parenthood;
- 4.7 Understand about different types of families;
- 4.8 Develop positive attitudes, values, integrity, self-respect and self-esteem;
- 4.9 Explore other people's attitudes and values;
- 4.10 Challenge and reduce discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender;
- 4.11 Address sexist, sexual, homophobic and transphobic bullying;
- 4.12 Gain knowledge and understanding about puberty and the changes that will take place;
- 4.13 Gain knowledge and understanding about reproduction and sexuality;
- 4.14 To counteract myths, correct misunderstanding they may have gained from the media and peers;
- 4.15 To be aware of the law on sexual behaviour, consent and abuse; and
- 4.16 Seek information and advice when they need help.

5. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

- 5.1 The school will ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary school curriculum.
- 5.2 RSE is taught primarily as part of PSHEE by a team of specialist teachers. The RSE co-ordinator who is the teacher in charge of PSHEE will keep tutors and house staff informed about the curriculum so they are able to support pupils one-to-one and are aware who to refer pupils to for expert help.
- 5.3 The RSE coordinator will work closely with the medical staff to ensure appropriate support is available to all pupils. RSE is also covered in RS and science lessons. The RSE coordinator is responsible for arranging input from external agencies to enhance RSE.
- 5.4 The RSE coordinator will be aware of the '*Equality Act*' 2010, and be mindful not to discriminate against any students because of any 'protected characteristics' (sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or sexual orientation) when planning for RSE.
 - 5.4.1 Be aware of and make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage or vulnerability under the SEND code of practice when planning for RSE.
 - 5.4.2 Set out the subject content, ensuring that it is always age appropriate.
 - 5.4.3 Advise on how RSE is taught, e.g., lesson planning for differentiation, and who is responsible for teaching it.
 - 5.4.4 Ensure that RSE will link with, but not duplicate, other aspects of the PSHEE curriculum e.g., drug education and student substance abuse, or areas of the wider curriculum, e.g., science, ICT and RE. Also ensure it will be set in the context of the school's general ethos (social, moral, spiritual and cultural) and promote the well-being of the students in general.

- 5.4.5 Discuss with any visiting agencies, before the session takes place, the details of all aspects, including resources, of what will be covered in any session that they are being invited to provide, as well as confidentiality and reporting any safeguarding issues. Parents are informed and material made available to them.
- 5.4.6 Be aware of how any safeguarding issue in the context of RSE will be dealt with at the school.

6. SUCCESS CRITERIA

- 6.1 Pupils feel informed by the education they receive;
- 6.2 Staff delivering RSE have clarity as to what is expected of them by the school;
- 6.3 Parents are aware of the policy and their right to withdraw their daughters from RSE lessons if they feel appropriate.

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1 **Implementation**

- 7.1.1 RSE is taught primarily as part of PSHEE by a team of specialist teachers. The Head of PSHEE will keep tutors and house staff informed about the curriculum so they are able to support pupils one-to-one and are aware who to refer pupils to for expert help. The Head of PSHEE will work closely with the medical staff to ensure appropriate support is available to all pupils. RSE is also covered in RS and science lessons. The Head of PSHEE is responsible for arranging input from external agencies to enhance RSE.
- 7.1.2 A wide range of teaching methods are utilised, that enable pupils to actively participate in their own learning and personal development. This includes use of academic research, quizzes, case studies, roleplay, film and documentaries, small group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers. Teaching is conducted in a safe designated PSHEE learning environment through the use of respectful ground rules and dialogue so that pupils are not expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to pupils.
- 7.1.3 The School believes that pupils should have opportunities to have their genuine questions and curiosity answered in an approachable and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a pupil may ask a particularly explicit or embarrassing question in class. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, it will be acknowledged and responded to later with the pupil who asked it. The Head of PSHEE will use their skill and discretion to decide about whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules and create a Code of Conduct with each set of pupils at the start of each academic year. This approach ensures that pupils are respectful, mature and sensible.

- 7.2 **External agencies** - External visitors are used to deliver certain topics within RSE because they can enhance delivery of the subject and bring specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people. The school checks in advance:

- 7.2.1 That the teaching delivered by visitors fits with the planned programme for teaching RSE;

- 7.2.2 The credentials of any visitor or visiting organisation
- 7.2.3 The details of what will be covered by the visitor, the materials that the visitor will use in the sessions, a session plan, and how the session will be delivered to ensure age appropriateness for our students and inclusivity, including those with SEND;
- 7.2.4 That the lead teacher will also discuss with the visitor aspects of confidentiality and reporting any safeguarding issues; and
- 7.2.5 To share the topics and materials to be used with parents
- 7.3 **Ethnic and Cultural Groups** - We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it may be felt that it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.
- 7.4 **Pupils with Special Needs** - We will ensure that all young people receive relationships and sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs to all our pupils, taking specialist advice as necessary.
- 7.5 **Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation**
 - 7.5.1 Some of our pupils will define themselves as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, non-binary or transgender. Pupils may also have gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, non-binary or transgender parents/guardians, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends.
 - 7.5.2 Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Our pastoral, medical and counselling support will take account of the needs of LGBTQ+ students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic bullying.
 - 7.5.3 We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that relationships and sex education is relevant to them.
- 7.6 **Monitoring** - The Deputy Head (Pastoral) has senior management responsibility for the strategic development of RSE. The Head of PSHEE has responsibility for coordinating RSE and is referred to as the RSE coordinator in this policy.

8. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 8.1 Evaluation of RSE is an ongoing process. Internal evaluation takes place within the department on an annual basis. Pupils are given an opportunity to evaluate the school's RSE provision. This will be undertaken by Head of PSHEE who will report any concerns to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- 8.2 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

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