



# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

<b>Date of issue:</b>	April 2020, updated January 2023, August 2023
<b>Date of next review:</b>	August 2024
<b>Responsible persons:</b>	Deputy Head (Pastoral)
<b>References:</b>	The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 and DfE Statutory Guidance <sup>1</sup> Equality Act 2010 Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023
<b>Appendix 1:</b>	Content
<b>Policy number:</b>	2c

## 1. Rationale and Ethos

St John's is committed to developing a strong community in which all of its members understand the importance of healthy, mutually supportive relationships. This policy is underpinned by this and four of our key purposes:

- equip our pupils with the knowledge, skills, resilience and optimism they need to thrive in the society of today and tomorrow;
- create a kind, inclusive, open-minded environment in which the contribution of every individual is valued;
- develop meaningful links with the local and wider community and demonstrate that we can all contribute positively to the world in which we live;
- appreciate the founding Christian principles of our school and value the spiritual and moral insights that this gives us.

The School recognises the importance of sexual relationships and that sex education is crucial in supporting young people in a complex real life and digital experiences, both now and in the future.

The School also recognises the significance of the parents/carers and the wider community in developing and supporting our young people.

Appendix 1 lists the content that schools are now required to teach (as stated in the DfE statutory guidance), for which parental consultation took place and will continue to take place as new content and issues come to the fore and new families join the school community.

A significant focus of the RSE curriculum is to safeguard and equip young people to avoid harmful or damaging situations, but this is not to the detriment of the primary focus of fostering a clear and positive understanding of healthy relationships.

## 2. Delivery

RSE is taught with the aim of fostering understanding and enabling valuable discussion of issues, perspectives and levels of comprehension of the content. The School does not teach specific value judgements in RSE, neither does it promote specific sexual orientation; the School and its RSE delivery upholds the Equality Act 2010 and recognises the diversity of the community, both within and beyond the School.

RSE is taught primarily by form tutors through PSHE lessons in all year groups with additional delivery through tutor time, house and whole school assemblies and through drop-down days. This means that pupils are divided into small groups within their age groups to allow lessons to be salient and enable access to and participation in discussion. Additionally, this enables RSE to be taught by

---

<sup>1</sup> Statutory guidance issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. Guidance on Health Education does not apply to independent schools, which make provision for the health education element of PSHE under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

teachers who know them well (academically as well as pastorally) and so can take into account age, gender, sexual identity, cultural and religious beliefs, any Special Educational Need or Disability or if they are EAL (English is an Additional Language). Pastoral staff are also most likely to know of any pupil experience which may require certain topics to be delivered with additional emotional support, extra content, emphasis or sensitivity.

The PSHE curriculum overview is appended to the *PSHE and Wellbeing Policy*: this maps out the delivery of topics within a year group and termly structure, thus showing the progression for pupils as they move through the School.

The PSHE and Wellbeing Policy outlines the scheme of work, safe and effective practice, support for delivery of the programme and should be considered in conjunction with this policy.

Where appropriate, external expertise is brought into School, for training and delivery purposes, in order to ensure pupils, staff and parents/carers have the most up-to-date, relevant and informed information. Bespoke sessions may also be added in order to address context-specific issues in more detail.

Other curriculum spaces for the delivery of RSE are as follows:

- theme days for whole year groups
- year group and whole school assemblies
- House assemblies
- biology lessons for the biological aspects of RSE
- many aspects of identity, relationships, equality, diversity, power balance and social justice are covered in subjects such as English, history, modern foreign languages and theology, philosophy and religion
- awareness events and campaigns for specific groups can address issues directly (e.g. LGBTQ+ events) or foster a culture in which healthy relationships can thrive (e.g. World Kindness Day, Anti-bullying Week)
- computer science addresses some elements of digital issues within RSE.

The Health Centre also provides a source of information and advice for all aspects of pupil health.

The School recognises that RSE may give rise to disclosure and any safeguarding or child protection concerns should be reported immediately to the DSL and DDSs using the normal procedures.

### **3. Safe and effective practice**

It is imperative that RSE is taught in a safe and supportive space. Teachers should establish clear ground rules and boundaries at the start of lessons (suggested resources include guidelines on such ground rules) taking into account the age, maturity, knowledge and sensitivities of their class. Particular attention should be made to ensure fair treatment for pupils with SEND or a protected characteristic. Time and space should be allowed for pupils to pose questions anonymously and, where deemed appropriate, these will inform future teaching and will be answered in lessons, assemblies, small groups by PSHE teachers, tutors, SHS, nurses or the DSL depending on the nature of the questions.

### **4. Engaging stakeholders**

We want RSE to be as pertinent and salient as possible to our pupils. As such, it is important to understand what their knowledge is, what their concerns are and what aspects of RSE they would like to cover. To this end, the Head of PSHE and Wellbeing will hear the pupil voice via feedback from teachers, anonymous questions and questionnaires and will adapt the programme of study and provision accordingly. The Head of PSHE and Wellbeing will also seek feedback from parents on the content of the RSE provision and their expectations and will take this into account when reviewing and adapting the programme.

### **5. Parental right to withdraw pupils from RSE**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Should a parent wish to withdraw their child, they should make a

formal request in writing to the Head. Before granting any such request it is expected that the Head will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. A record will be kept of this process.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the School will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the School will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Head may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

## **6. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation**

It is expected that teachers and those delivering RSE:

- plan and deliver RSE according to this policy
- assess pupils' understanding of content using a range of strategies (individualised and anonymised)
- provide accurate information, including about external health professionals available to young people
- avoid offering advice about sexual health, including contraception
- take into account the following about their pupils: age, gender, sexual identity, cultural and religious beliefs; any Special Educational Need or Disability or if they are EAL (English is an Additional Language); any pupil experience which may require certain topics to be delivered with additional emotional support, extra content, emphasis or sensitivity
- do not offer complete confidentiality
- follow the School's policies on safeguarding when necessary.

Reflect critically on the programme, enable pupils to regularly offer their reflections and forward concerns or trends to the relevant staff (the Head of PSHE and Wellbeing; SHS and SLT).

PSHE and RSE are discussed and reviewed regularly at SHS meetings to improve consistency and confidence in delivery and to evaluate on the effectiveness of lessons. SHS provide feedback to the Head of PSHE and Wellbeing.

SLT will monitor and evaluate the full RSE provision via the line management of the Head of Wellbeing and PSHE by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and ongoing monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

Governing Council's Education Committee has oversight of the Relationships and Sex Education Curriculum.

## **7. Approval**

This Relationships and Sex Education Policy is approved by the Head and noted by Governing Council's Education Committee. It will be reviewed at least every two years, taking into account the evaluation and stakeholder engagement referred to above.

## APPENDIX 1: CONTENT

This appendix directly quotes the relevant lists of content for secondary schools in the DfE's statutory guidance (p.27-30)

### **By the end of secondary school:**

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

#### **Families**

Pupils should know

- 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 relationship 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.
- how to: determine whether other children, 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.

#### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

Pupils should know

- 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 (nonsexual) types of relationship.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful 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.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- 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.

#### **Online and media**

Pupils should know

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- 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.

- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- the impact of viewing harmful content.
- 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.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online. Being safe Pupils should know
- 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.
- 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).

### **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

Pupils should know

- 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 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.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- 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.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- 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).
- 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.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

### **The Law**

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youthproduced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion

- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)