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Relationships and Sex Education Policy: Secondary phase

Member of Staff Responsible	Chief executive Officer
Relevant guidance/advice/legal reference	Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, published by the DfE, 2019
Approved by	Board of Trustees (Section 1) and LGB, Appendix 2
Date of Policy	June 2022
Review Cycle	1 year
Date of Next Review	June 2023
Website	Yes

This policy is divided into two sections.

The main body of the policy: This establishes the ethos, standard procedure of consultation for development and the statement of intention of our trust (applying to all schools) with respect to how we approach Relationships and Sex Education. It is approved by the Board of Trustees.

Appendices 1-3: Appendices 1 and 3 are approved by the trust. Appendix 2, which represents the detail of the delivery of the curriculum is written by the school and approved by the Local Governing Body.

Section 1:

1.1 Statement of intent

Effective Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is essential if students are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Students can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. (*Relationship and Sex Education, DfES*).

1.2 Statutory requirements

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, make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education.

1.3 Aims

- The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to: Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Give students an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds.

1.4 Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all students under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At St Martins School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy – see SECTION 2

1.5 Policy Development (consultation and approval)

Given each school has its own relationship with stakeholders, this policy (at trust level) sets out below the consultation process for policy development. It is for the school to oversee and the consultation relates to the information in SECTION 2, which is specific for each school.

The policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to comment on the policy. The school may decide to hold a meeting, but this is not a statutory requirement.
- Student consultation – a school will consult with its student population
- Ratification (See **Roles and Responsibilities (1.9)**) - once amendments were made (including those by the local governing body), the policy was approved. The Local Governing Body approve the implementation on of this policy (SECTION 2); the trust Board approve the principles which govern the policy (SECTION 1).

1.6 Definition

Relationship and Sex Education is learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also involves learning about sexuality, sexual health, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

1.6.1 Equal Opportunities

We value equality of opportunity highly. The RSE curriculum offers children the opportunity to discuss attitudes and values relating to equality issues and the protected characteristics of age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or sexual orientation.

As part of our whole school approach, our RSE programme fosters gender and LGBTQ+ equality, challenging all forms of discrimination and bullying. We are respectful of how students choose to identify themselves, understanding that their sexual orientation and gender identity may be emerging and fluid.

1.6.2 Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is, and what is not, appropriate in a relationship can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue.

Confidentiality must not prevent action if the child is 'at risk'. Teachers will listen to anything a child tells them in confidence. However, if a teacher feels that a child is at risk then the appropriate people will be contacted in accordance with the Child Protection Policy.

1.7 Delivery of the RSE programme

Delivery of our curriculum is set out in Appendix 2. Appendix 3 indicates the knowledge and understanding framework around which the curriculum is built. Although occasional adaptation may be necessary on a short-term basis (and we will not consult on this because it will be an operational, rather than strategic decision). RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

- We have developed the curriculum to take account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If they ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed. We will endeavour to do this in a way that means our students do not need to seek answers online.
- The use of offensive and sexualised language (swear and slang terms, including homophobic language) and behaviour will be addressed with students and as appropriate, parents/carers will be involved in accordance with our behaviour policy.
- Students' questions will be responded to by staff (teaching and non-teaching staff) as they arise in a straightforward manner. Information will be provided, using correct terminology for body parts and functions, appropriate to the age and maturity of the student.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

1.8 Use of external agencies (if appropriate for our school)

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

1.9 Roles and responsibilities

1.9.1 Board of Trustees and the local governing body of each school

The Board of Trustees approves SECTION 1. The Local Governing Body will receive the entire policy (including SECTION 2) and will hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The LGB will help to influence SECTION 2 through the consultation process and will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

1.9.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from components of RSE (see section 1.10).

1.9.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the components of RSE.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher and PSE lead Hannah Weaver. Jed Machin (Head of Year and humanities) and Michael Moore (Head of Year and humanities teacher) teach year 7, 8 and 9 RSE. Hannah Weaver oversees the whole SOW and teaches KS4 as well as KS3.

1.9.4 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

1.9.5 Parents/carers

Parents/carers have a key role in offering advice. In doing so, they may wish to refer to the policy and contact the school, in order to support the school in this respect.

1.9.6 The role of Health Professionals

Health professionals who are involved in delivering programmes are expected to work within the schools' RSE policy and on the instructions of the headteacher. However, when they are in their professional role, such as a school nurse in a consultation with an individual student, they should follow their own professional code of conduct.

Health Professionals may:

- Work closely with teachers in supporting RSE in school (complementing the role of the teacher)
- Help schools work in partnership with parents/carers and make links between the school and other relevant professionals and services such as local GPs, family planning clinics, Genito-Urinary (GU) clinics etc.
- Tell students about the health services that are available in the area and help them develop the confidence and skills to make good use of them
- Give students confidential support and advice, through services such as the drop- in sessions
- Provide specific and up-to-date knowledge about sexual health and well-being and contraception
- Parents/carers may find it difficult to talk to their children about sex and relationships and therefore they need support in their role, in which case they should actively seek help from the school or other professional agencies (such as their GP).

1.10 Parents right to Withdraw

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education regulations 2019 (made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017) confirms the 1996 Education Act that parents have the right to withdraw their child from part, or all, of the sex education programme that does not form part of the science education curriculum. There is **no parental right** of withdrawal from the relationship education, nor from the sex education curriculum that includes understanding the adolescent body.

Parents **do** have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non science components of sex education within RSE.

Parental withdrawal applies up to three terms before a student is sixteen, at which point the student can decide for themselves.

We would encourage parents to discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity. Any such request from a parent/carer to withdraw a student should be made in writing to the school. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative school work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	Notes on agreed actions

Appendix 2

Year	Topic/ content
7	Relationships Puberty
8	Stereotyping and bullying What is sex? What is contraception? What are the types available? Sexual feelings and relationships Sexually transmitted diseases with a focus on HIV/Aids and the stigma still associated with it. Marriage and civil partnerships Personal values FGM
9	Being assertive Health and unhealthy relationships What do you value from a relationship Consent Sexual health Domestic violence (sexual harassment and sexual violence) Sex and the media (how the media can influence behaviour).
10	Consent recap Types of intimacy and overcoming barriers about sexual health STI recap Understanding a variety of faith and cultural practices concerning sexual activity Relationships online, tolerance and hate Pregnancy and parenthood.
11	Personal values and relationships Forced marriage Pressured into sex and sexual health Women and the media Pornography and the law
Assemblies	sexual harassment and sexual violence safety online (Local PSO) That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail

By the end of secondary school students should know

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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(AND YEARS 8 -11 too) • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships(AND YEARS 8 -11 too) • 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

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 (Assemblies) • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online (Assemblies, year 8)
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 (Assemblies, year 8-11 PSE lessons) • 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)

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 (AND YEARS 8 -11 too) • 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 (AND YEARS 8 -11 too) • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • 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