



Merchant Taylors' School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy MTGS

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RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

Statutory Regulations and Guidance

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 Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

The following statutory guidance and non-statutory advice is reflected in the development and maintenance of this policy:

- [Statutory guidance on RSE and health education](#) to include the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- [Keeping children safe in education: for schools and colleges](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#)
- [Cyberbullying: advice and headteachers and school staff](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)

Rationale and Aims

RSE is concerned with attitudes and values, personal and social skills, respect for self and others, family, stable loving relationships, feelings, gender roles and decision making. It is about the physical, emotional, social, moral and legal dimensions of human sexuality as well as a factual teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health.

At MTGS, we aim to develop well-educated, well-rounded and caring young women who will play a significant role in society. They will become good women, good wives and good mothers; they will be good team members as well as leaders; above all, they will seek to be a positive influence wherever they find themselves.

Through our delivery of the RSE curriculum, we aim to give pupils:

- Information that they need to be able to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds (not just intimate relationships);
- The ability to identify what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, colleague and what it takes to make a successful marriage, civil partnership or other type of long term committed relationship;
- Knowledge about physical, moral and emotional development which they need to understand their own and others' sexuality;
- Scientific information about conception, contraception, pregnancy and miscarriage;
- Information about reproductive health to include fertility, menstrual cycle, menopause and STIs;
- An understanding of how harmful or addictive behaviours can impact upon their physical and mental health;
- Information relating to important aspects of a healthy lifestyle to include personal hygiene, balanced diet, physical exercise and the importance of sleep;
- Details of the law relating to the status of various personal relationships, sexual consent, pornography, equality, sexual harassment/violence, coercive behaviour, drugs and alcohol;
- Knowledge about the risks which they face in the online world, how to recognise them and keep themselves safe (to include when and how to report issues);

- Some basic first aid skills;

An over-riding theme throughout the delivery of this material will be regular guidance for pupils which informs them about how to get support and advice if they have concerns about any aspect of the topics being discussed. This signposting will be to staff / resources available in School as well as to carefully selected outside agencies. The school will ensure that in its delivery of RSE, it will ensure that there is balanced debate about issues that are seen to be contentious e.g. distinctive faith perspectives on relationships and sex.

Links to other policies

This RSE policy should be read in conjunction with the following related School policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Pastoral Policy

Co-ordination

The responsibility for the co-ordination of the RSE policy and its delivery falls to the Head of PSHE, under the supervision of the Assistant Head, Pastoral.

Resources and training will be available to the staff who deliver the RSE curriculum in order to maintain consistency of content and quality.

Delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the programme

High quality, age-appropriate teaching will help our pupils prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils in School and in wider society.

RSE content will be delivered through a range of subject areas and opportunities, including:

- Academic lessons in Biology, ICT and PE;
- PSHE lessons delivered by Form Tutors;
- Assemblies delivered by senior staff;
- Presentations by suitably qualified and approved external speakers.

The delivery of the programme will be monitored by the pastoral team and the Head of PSHE regularly throughout the academic year through lesson observations, pupil voice forums and work scrutiny. Pupils and parents will also be regularly surveyed to help the School evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the RSE programme.

Monitoring and Evaluation – the roles of parents, pupils, governors and staff

This policy is available to all parents through the School's website. This gives parents every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of the RSE curriculum.

Parents, pupils and staff will be consulted regularly throughout the academic year and there will be specific points in time at which this policy is reviewed. Formal consultation with parents will take place through the parental forums and surveys. Pupils will have the opportunity to give their views through the School Council and staff will be consulted through the pastoral hierarchy or Form Tutors, Group Tutors and SMT. Whilst the School will listen to the views of all the key stakeholders, their opinions will not amount to a power of veto over the curriculum content of the School's Programme.

Parents are encouraged to raise any questions which they may have about this policy during any consultation period/forum and through the normal school procedures for raising concerns.

Oversight and ratification of this policy is given to the Governors' Education and Safeguarding Committee. The Policy is reviewed annually.

Right to withdraw pupils from sex education

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of the statutory RSE curriculum, up to and until three terms before their child turns 16 years of age. They should do so by writing to the Headmistress. (This does not include content covered within the Science Curriculum nor does it cover PSHE or Relationships content).

Following this, the Headmistress will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate with their 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 the time is reached when the pupil is three terms before their 16th birthday, they may choose to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn. In this instance, the School will provide the child with sex education during one of these terms.

The School will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, they will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Relationships and Sex Education will be accessible for all pupils. Differentiation is practised to ensure accessibility for all pupils.

The School is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their Special Educational Need of Disability. For some pupils there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet their specific needs.

Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT)

The School will ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, that pupils understand that sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics and the importance of equality and respect. All pupils will be taught LGBT content as part of the RSE curriculum in a sensitive and age-appropriate way.

RSE CURRICULUM CONTENT

Relationships and Sex Education

Aspect	Curriculum content
Families	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that there are different types of committed, respectful and 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	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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 of relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, gender identity 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	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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. • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
Being safe	<p>Pupils should know</p>

	<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. • 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).
<p>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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. • 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.

Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.• that happiness is linked to being connected to others.• how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.• common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).• how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.• the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
Internet safety and harms	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the 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 of 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.• how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
Physical health and fitness	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.• the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardio-vascular ill-health.• about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.
Healthy eating	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions. • the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances. • the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood. • the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency. • awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks. • 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.
Health and prevention	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics. • about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist. • (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination. • the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
Basic first aid	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic treatment for common injuries. • life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.¹⁵ • the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.
Changing adolescent body	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing. • the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

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 pupils 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 will 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', youth-produced 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)

Policy Owner: Headmistress MTGS/Head of PHSE

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