



Merchant Taylors'
School

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Stanfield MTS

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

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INTRODUCTION

Following the Department of Education guidelines¹, the school is required to teach Relationships Education. Relationships Education is defined as the focus on the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. While Sex Education is not compulsory at Primary level, the school feels it is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. Therefore, the school has developed a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.

As part of the *Merchants' Mindset*, the school believes that RSE and Health Education should be undertaken to develop our pupils into self-confident young people with key attributes such as honesty, kindness, tolerance, resilience and self-efficacy.

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. There is no parental right to withdraw pupils from receiving Relationship Education between the ages of 5 to the end of Year 6, however, parents have the right to withdraw their child from sex education. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

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

- [Statutory guidance on RSE and health education](#)
- [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](#)
- [Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges](#)

As noted in the statutory guidance, Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, however, the school has determined that additional content on sex education is necessary to meet the needs of the pupils. The sex education programme is tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils, ensuring that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings.

¹ Department of Education (2019)

Rationale and Aims

RSE is an important part of the school's overall Pastoral Initiative (refer to Merchant Mindset document for further information). It 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 factual teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health.

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

The aims of RSE can be summarised as follows:

- to provide information to students
- to encourage personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour
- to promote wellbeing, mental health and self-esteem
- to actively promote a culture of respect and consideration of others, fighting misogynistic attitudes in the wake of the *Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (2021)*.

The content of the RSE curriculum will include:

- 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 long-term committed relationship
- Knowledge about physical, moral and emotional development which they need to understand their own and others' sexuality
- Scientific information on anatomy, puberty, reproduction, conception and birth
- An understanding of how harmful or addictive behaviours can impact their physical and mental health
- Information relating to important aspects of a healthy lifestyle and
- Details of the law relating to the status of various personal relationships, sexual consent, 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);

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.

DELIVERY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

The curriculum content is delivered in a non-judgmental, factual way using high quality, age-appropriate teaching. This 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 the wider society.

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

- Academic lessons in PSHE, PE & Games, and Science lessons
- Form Time
- Assemblies
- Presentations by suitably qualified and approved external speakers
- Through the delivery of the Merchants' Mindset

While most of the Relationships and Health Curriculum will be delivered by teaching staff, set in the context of the school's ethos and pastoral care system, some aspects will be taught by the School Nurse, where appropriate. This will work in tandem with the school's SMSC and PSHE curriculum.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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 and are consulted on its content.

Parents, pupils and staff will be consulted 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 at these times through parental questionnaires. 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, Key Stage Leads and Senior Leadership Team.

Parents are encouraged to raise any questions which they may have about this policy with the Assistant Head Pastoral.

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

Right to withdraw pupils from sex education

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from some or all the **sex education** delivered as part of the statutory RSE curriculum. They should do so by writing to the Headmistress (This does not include content covered within the Science Curriculum nor does or cover PSHE or Relationships content).

Following this, the Headmistress will automatically grant to withdraw a child from sex education. The School will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, they will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. The school will document this process and ensure a record is kept, as recommended by ISI.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Relationships and Sex Education will be accessible to 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. Through teaching on families and people who care for me, which can include LGBT parents, along with families headed by grandparents, single parents, adoptive parents, and foster parents/carers, among other family structures, teaching will be taught in a sensitive and age-appropriate way.

Pupils and Faith Perspectives

The religious background of all pupils must be considered when planning teaching, so that topics that are included in the core content are appropriately handled. The school will comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion and belief are amongst protected characteristics. Teaching will always reflect the law as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions that may make.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

The curriculum proactively addresses issues in a timely way, in line with the current evidence on children's physical, emotional and sexual development. School has the flexibility to determine an age-appropriate approach which meets the needs of our young people. It is developed in consultation with parents and in response to local public health and community issues and the needs of individual pupils.

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

- online behaviours including image and information sharing
- sexuality
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- hate crime

RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION (RSE):

<p>Families and people who care for me</p>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. 2. The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other’s lives. 3. That others’ families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children’s families are also characterised by love and care. 4. That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children’s security as they grow up. 5. That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. 6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
<p>Caring Friendships & Respectful Relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. 2. The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. 3. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. 5. How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed. 6. The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. 7. Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. 8. The conventions of courtesy and manners. 9. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. 10. 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 those in positions of authority.
Online Relationships	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. 2. That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. 3. The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. 4. How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. 5. How information and data is shared and used online
Being Safe	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) 2. About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. 3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences

	<p>between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. 5. How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. 6. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. 7. How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. 8. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources
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HEALTH EDUCATION

Mental wellbeing	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary 2. The NHS Five Steps to Wellbeing² 3. That happiness is linked to being connected to others 4. How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns 5. Common types of mental ill-health (e.g. anxiety and depression) 6. About the Growth Mindset
Internet safety and harms	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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) 2. How people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media 3. 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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress 2. 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 cardiovascular ill-health

² NHS (2019)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.
Health, Hygiene and Puberty	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics 2. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist 3. The importance of sufficiently good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. 4. Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body 5. The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for both emotional and physical health
Sex Education (Year 6 – right to opt out)	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The biological process of conception 2. How the baby develops in the womb during pregnancy 3. About some of the needs of a baby after birth 4. What is meant by the legal term consent 5. That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex, reflecting the law as it applies to relationships.

ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the latest RSHE statutory guidance, there are the same high expectations of the quality of pupil’s work in RSE as for other curriculum areas. Assessment and feedback are given in lessons both written and verbally as per the school feedback policy, providing pupils with information on their progress.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Department of Education (2019) *Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers.*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

National Health Service (2019) *5 Steps to Mental Wellbeing*

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

Links to other policies

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

- Merchants' Mindset Pastoral Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy (Rewards & Sanctions)
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- PSHE Curriculum