



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Date of Policy:	May 2023
Policy Owner:	Deputy Head, Pastoral
Next Policy Review:	May 2024
Review Frequency:	Annual
Previous Versions:	September 2022
Governor Committee(s):	Child Protection, Welfare & Boarding Committee

This policy covers the Trent College approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

All children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSE.

Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools and the community.

We are also committed to RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBT+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject.

We will also take steps to ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when planning and delivering RSE.

Definitions

We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate sexual and committed relationships and family life.

We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health. Sexual health and sexually transmitted infections are taught as part of the Health Education aspect of PSHE.

We take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way and using a gender equity and human rights framework. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.

Aims

- To give pupils the knowledge and understanding they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
- To know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.
- To enable pupils to understand contraception
- To enable pupils to understand the nature of intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).
- To ensure an effective understanding of the nature, and fundamental importance, of consent
- To highlight the positive effects that good relationships have on mental wellbeing and how to identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- To enable pupils to mature, to build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.
- To deliver a programme that supports the pupils throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.
- To provide knowledge about safer sex and sexual health to ensure that pupils are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.
- To ensure clear progression from what is taught in primary years.

Our provision will not encourage early sexual experimentation but will strive to teach pupils to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

Responsibilities

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) is responsible overall for Relationships and Sex Education provision from Years 7 to 13.

The Head of PSHE will develop and administer the programme, in consultation with the Deputy Head (Pastoral), School Nurse and Designated Safeguarding Lead, to ensure that all requirements are met.

The Full Pastoral Team will have opportunities to review the programme and contribute to its development each year.

The RSE Programme

The Relationships and Sex Education Programme will be delivered through a variety of channels that include:

- The biology curriculum
 - Reproductive anatomy and sexual reproduction
 - the menstrual cycle and aspects of fertility
- Tutor led PSHE Lessons
 - Families and respectful relationships
 - Online and media
 - Being safe (including online safety)
 - Relationships and the law
 - Positive emotional and physical wellbeing
- Specialist led PSHE lessons
 - Intimate sexual relationships including sexual health
 - Puberty and menstruation (girls)
 - Puberty and sexual maturity (boys)
- Assemblies
 - Positive Health and Positive Identity
 - Online and media
 - Being safe

The co-curricular programme actively promotes many aspects of positive health and wellbeing. We encourage all pupils to maintain a broad and fulfilling programme to promote all round health and wellbeing. Notably through:

- Sport
- Debating
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award Programme
- CCF
- PE and Games

Where appropriate, tutors will lead sessions because of their close, trusting and established relationships with the pupils. Specialist teachers will be deployed for subjects requiring skills that are judged to be beyond the scope of the role of tutoring. Wherever possible, sex education will take place in small groups so that questions and discussions are encouraged and account is taken of the different levels of maturity.

RSE lessons may consider questions or issues that some pupils will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons there is a reminder and agreement of the ground rules, which are established at the beginning of the course that prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson.

When pupils ask questions, we will aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established. The opportunity to ask questions anonymously may be used. If it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the pupils, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

Keeping children safe is our priority, and we recognise that our provision can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

We will strive to maintain an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This should include when they have a concern about a friend or peer.

Staff know what to do if a pupil tells them that they are being abused or neglected or are witnessing abuse.

Staff know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) must be informed of anything that is safeguarding-related in the context of these subjects.

External visitors will be advised on how they must deal with, and report, any safeguarding concerns.

Further Support and Information for Parents

The School believes that engagement with parents regarding Relationships and Sex Education is important. Parents are the key figures in guiding their children to cope with the emotional, physical and psychological aspects of growing up and in preparing them to cope with challenges, responsibilities and fulfilment which sexual maturity brings. Through its RSE programme the School has a role that is complementary to and supportive of that of the parents and we welcome parental engagement in relation to this programme. This policy is available to all parents on the School's website.

We will engage with parents and carers, through timely communication and when reviewing and adapting our offer. Parents and carers should contact the Head of Year in the first instance to discuss any questions or concerns they have regarding their pupil and we encourage further dialogue at home surrounding RSE. RSE in school forms part of a pupil's development and works in partnership with discussions and guidance in the home.

If parents require more information on RSE for secondary school aged pupils, this is a useful source of information:

- [Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education - a guide for secondary school parents \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/Understanding_Relationships_Sex_and_Health_Education_-_a_guide_for_secondary_school_parents.pdf)

Other useful links for Parents:

- <http://www.brook.org.uk/>
- <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/home.aspx>
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/SexRelationships/Pages/SexRelationships.aspx>
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/section/34/enacted>

Right of Withdrawal

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE. Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education; from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum or from Health Education.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.

Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the Head of Year to discuss their concerns.

The Head of Year will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum. If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the Head of Year in writing and the school will keep a record of this.

We will respect the parents' request to withdraw their 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 arrange to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

All children will have the right to opt into sex education three terms before they turn 16 and the school will arrange for this to happen. In practice, this means that when a child turns 15 they have the right to be taught sex education if they want to.

Statement of Intent

Our Relationships and Sex Education provision should:

- Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, in order to make informed choices;
- Be positively inclusive in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience particularly HIV status and pregnancy;
- Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe relationships and ensure good communication about these matters;
- Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media;
- Provide opportunities for reflection in order to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care;
- Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life.
- Reflect the age and level of the learner;
- Ensure pupils are clearly informed of their rights such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding;
- Be relevant and meet the needs of pupils, and actively involve them as participants, advocates and evaluators in developing high quality provision;
- Be delivered by competent and confident educators;
- Be provided within a learning environment that is safe and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.