



## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

The School recognises its responsibility to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of its pupils. It aims to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adolescence and adult life.

It seeks to provide a safe and stimulating environment which, in partnership with parents and the wider community, will enable pupils to learn about moral, physical and emotional development.

This policy was written following consultation with Principals, Heads, staff, the PTA and the parent body. It is also underpinned by the stated school aim that Thomas's, while welcoming pupils of all faiths nevertheless adheres to the principles of Christian belief, which govern the behaviour of one person towards another. Each individual is encouraged to behave in a natural, happy and responsible way and to be mindful of the needs of others.

This Policy has been renamed RSE (from SRE) in line with government guidelines. There is also currently a consultation underway on changes to the provision of RSE. Any amendments or recommendations following the consultation will be reflected in the next review of this policy.

### AIMS OF RSE

#### **What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?**

It has three main elements:

- Attitudes and values
- Personal and social skills
- Knowledge and understanding

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It prepares children for the changes and challenges of puberty and allows them to consider the responsibilities of adulthood. It also teaches about reproduction and sexual health but does not promote early sexual activity.

#### **Why should it be taught in school?**

RSE begins at a very early age and, while much of it is learnt from parents, it is also received from friends, books, magazines, television, internet, music, films and so on. Some of this information can be incorrect, confusing or frightening. RSE in school provides a secure framework and

environment in which pupils can be given the facts using appropriate materials. It also allows them to develop necessary personal skills and a positive attitude to sexual health and well-being.

Wide ranging research has shown that children want information about changes and situations they will experience before they happen to them. A structured programme in school increases the probability of this being achieved. Also, although children want to be able to discuss relationships and sex with their parents, many parents and children prefer the school to take a lead and provide a springboard for the discussion. A partnership between home and school and open dialogue between parent and child are the ideal.

### **What does the School want RSE to do for the pupils?**

RSE will:

- provide information which is easy to understand and relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of the children
- include the development of communication and social skills
- encourage the exploration and clarification of values and the development of positive attitudes

Through RSE we want to ensure that the children:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings, friendships and relationships
- are able to name parts of their body and describe how their bodies work
- can protect themselves and ask for help and support
- are prepared for puberty
- learn about the nature of marriage/stable relationships and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children
- understand and respect different types of relationships, including friendships, family relationships and dealing with strangers
- understand the characteristics of healthy relationships
- understand how relationships may affect mental and physical health

and in the Upper School:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour
- understand the law regarding the age of consent and the arguments for delaying sexual activity to maturity and within a loving, responsible relationship
- are aware of online safety with regard to forming relationships
- understand the reasons for protected sex, avoiding casual sex and the importance of sexual health
- understand and respect all sexual orientations
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others
- communicate effectively
- have sufficient skills and information to be able to protect themselves

## ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

RSE is not taught in isolation. It is rooted in the SEAL programme, the PSHCE programme and the Science curriculum and it is supported by the whole School's ethos.

The Head, Heads of Upper and Middle School (where applicable) and the Head of Lower School are responsible for the RSE scheme of work. The Pastoral leaders within each school are responsible for monitoring its delivery.

The compulsory part of RSE is taught through Science lessons in line with the Science National Curriculum.

The Science National Curriculum requires that in the Lower School pupils are taught:

- that animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- to recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans and other animals
- that humans and other animals can produce offspring and that these offspring grow into adults
- to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others, and to treat others with sensitivity

In Years 3 to 6 the following concepts are revisited as part of the compulsory Science curriculum:

- that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction
- about the main stages of the human life cycle

In Years 7 and 8 the following concepts are revisited:

- that fertilization in humans...is the fusion of a male and a female cell
- about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
- about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation
- how the foetus develops in the uterus
- how the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health.

Where any of this information or these topics are introduced through the RSE syllabus earlier than the year designated by the Science syllabus, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the lessons.

Discrete lessons are allocated for those parts of the RSE syllabus that cannot be delivered via Science, PSHCE, Assemblies, Circle Time and other subjects. These are taught in the Lower School by the form teacher and in the Prep School either by the form teacher or by a volunteer colleague plus supplementary specialist visitors from outside agencies when felt to be appropriate.

All form tutors are familiar with this policy and the syllabus and will be prepared to support pupils and answer direct questions as appropriate.

The School is committed to using the best teaching materials and to providing appropriate training and support for staff. PSHCE Leaders are responsible for monitoring training needs and for researching and providing appropriate resources.

## STRATEGIES

The School is committed to employing active learning methods which involve pupils' full participation. It is essential that schools can help pupils develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about relationships and sex.

Most lessons will be taught to full classes, with gender groups for certain topics as deemed appropriate.

- **Ground rules** help to create a safe environment for both teacher and pupil. They should be established with each class before RSE lessons commence. (see examples in syllabus)
- **Distancing techniques** help to avoid embarrassment and protect privacy. Role play, case studies with invented characters, appropriate videos, etc can help pupils to discuss issues in a depersonalised, safe environment.
- **Dealing with questions.** Teachers must be supported and prepared for the unexpected. e.g.
  - the ground rules should be referred to if a question is too personal
  - if a teacher does not know the answer to a question they should acknowledge this and research it later.
  - if a teacher feels that a question is too explicit, is too advanced for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge the question and promise to deal with it on an individual basis. The teacher will inform parents about any issue or question that he/she feels needs to be followed up at home.
  - if a teacher is concerned that a child is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- **Discussion and reflection** should be a part of the RSE lessons. Active learning ensures opportunities for considering beliefs and attitudes and for developing greater understanding. Watching a video or reading written material must be used only to support or to complement wider structured activities.

Factual information in written form may be useful for the pupils to have for future reference.

## Working with Parents

Parents are the key people in:

- teaching their children about relationships and sex
- maintaining the culture and ethos of the family
- helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up
- preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

Parents need to know that the personal beliefs and attitudes of the teachers will not influence the teaching of RSE. Teachers will work within the guidelines of this policy and the scheme of work.

The school will provide support for parents through sharing with them the school's RSE programme contents and by working with the PTA to invite external speakers to contribute to the parent education programme.

**Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RSE provided at school** except for those parts included in the Science syllabus. The school will make alternative arrangements for pupils in such cases and will make available an information pack for parents.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The best interests of the child are our main concern. Children have a right to expect school to be a safe and secure environment. Teachers need to be aware that effective RSE can lead to disclosures from pupils that may be a child protection issue.

Key points:

- The school has in place a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and a Confidentiality policy.
- Teachers cannot offer or guarantee unconditional confidentiality.
- Only in exceptional circumstances will the school handle information without parental knowledge
- Children will be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers. If a teacher has to pass information on to parents, the child will be informed first and supported as appropriate.
- Any visitor from an outside agency involved with pupils in RSE will be made aware of the confidentiality rules and whom to approach on the staff with concerns.

## RESOURCES

The PSHCE Leaders research current resources and provide a range of appropriate materials. Resources will be made available for parents to view prior to use with the children.

## REFERENCES

This policy has been informed by:

DfE Policy Statement: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (March 2017)

The Christopher Winter Project for SRE Education (2016)

DfE Government Response: Life Lessons: PSHE and SRE in Schools (July 2015)

DfE Supplementary Guidance 'Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' (2014)

DfE Draft Guidance to Schools on Sex and Relationships Education (2010)

DfE 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (July 2000)

**See also:** [Confidentiality Policy](#), [Equal Opportunities Policy](#), [PSHCE Policy](#), [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

<b>This policy will be reviewed annually</b>
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Reviewed: December 2007	By:	Jill Kelham, Vice Principal	No changes
Latest Review: April 2018	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal, Deputy Heads, Pastoral	Changes made
Next review: April 2019	By;	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal and Deputy Heads, Pastoral	

**Appendices**

Appendix 1: Thomas's RSE Curriculum

## RSE POLICY APPENDIX 1



## RSE Curriculum

Relationships and Sex Education has three main elements:

- Attitudes and values
- Personal and social skills
- Knowledge and understanding

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of committed, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexual activity and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

The school recognises the key role of parents in this subject and undertakes to work co-operatively with them. The RSE Policy, syllabus and resources, and the Confidentiality Policy, are available for parents to view on request.

There are discrete RSE lessons for those parts of the syllabus that cannot be delivered through Science, PSHCE or other areas of the curriculum. These are taught in the Lower School by the form teacher and in the Prep School by either the form teacher, a volunteer colleague or a specialist visitor plus form teachers. Personal beliefs and attitudes will not influence the teaching of RSE.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RSE provided at school except for those parts included on the Science syllabus. The school will make other arrangements for pupils in such cases and will make available information for parents on the syllabus covered.

Year	Main teaching points
Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The difference between living and non-living things</li> <li>• The cycle of life (parents, grandparents etc)</li> <li>• Keeping safe, people to trust</li> </ul>
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All living things originate from other things</li> <li>• Introduction to life cycles</li> <li>• Children's own development from a baby (growth and change)</li> <li>• Relationships (parents, siblings, friends etc)</li> <li>• What makes a good friend</li> </ul>
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences between male and female: physical, including correct body part names (discrete session)</li> <li>• Differences between male and female other than physical</li> <li>• Challenging gender stereotypes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal identity and self-esteem</li> <li>• Social change, becoming more independent and considering others</li> <li>• Keeping safe/appropriate and inappropriate touching (discrete session), the right to say no: P.A.N.T.S.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process of change – developmental milestones, strengths and character traits</li> <li>• Personal development – physical and in taking responsibility, making choices</li> <li>• Relationships including friends, parent and family</li> <li>• Roles and characteristics of different family groups and members</li> <li>• Keeping safe, privacy, modesty</li> </ul>
<b>Year 4</b> (2 discrete sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility and commitment of parenthood</li> <li>• Importance of secure relationships and family life</li> <li>• Conception and fertilisation (male and female needed to make a baby)</li> <li>• Development of babies inside the womb and the importance of the mothers health</li> <li>• How a baby is born</li> </ul>
<b>Year 5</b> (2 discrete sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change as a part of life</li> <li>• Puberty for girls</li> <li>• Puberty for boys</li> <li>• Feelings associated with puberty, physical and emotional changes</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Importance of a healthy diet, exercise, hygiene and sleep</li> <li>• Expectations and stereotypes</li> </ul>
<b>Year 6</b> (2 discrete sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation of puberty, sexual intercourse, conception and birth</li> <li>• Hygiene, healthy diet and exercise</li> <li>• Relationships and friendships</li> <li>• Emotions – relationships with parents</li> <li>• Loss and change (leaving childhood and becoming an adult)</li> <li>• Role of pornography and presentation in the media</li> <li>• Keeping safe; recognising and dealing with inappropriate behaviour</li> </ul>
<b>Year 7</b> (2 discrete sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body image and self-esteem</li> <li>• Emotional changes in puberty</li> <li>• How sex and relationships are presented in the media</li> <li>• Positive values and moral framework to guide decisions, judgement and behaviour</li> <li>• Understand consequences of behaviour</li> <li>• Relationships and friendships</li> <li>• Peer pressure</li> </ul>
<b>Year 8</b> (2 discrete sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit emotional and physical changes</li> <li>• Review of loss of childhood/moving into adulthood</li> <li>• Managing greater independence – responsibilities and pressures</li> <li>• Peer pressure – relationships and friendships, social pressures</li> <li>• Well-being during adolescence</li> <li>• Rights and responsibilities of adolescence</li> <li>• How the law applies to sexual relationships</li> <li>• The argument for delaying sexual activity</li> <li>• The reasons for having protected sex</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted diseases</li> <li>• How to access advice and support</li> </ul>

