

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is always taught with due regard to moral and legal considerations and with the explicit values of family life and supportive relationships.

### Introduction

RSE is part of lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. At St John's, RSE is centred on personal safety, caring for others and building strong family relationships. This is coupled with teaching pupils about sexual health (including safe sex), and sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

Effective relationship and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. RSE at St John's is intended to help pupils learn about relationships, emotions, sexuality and sexual health but is not about the promotion of sexual activity. We aim to present relevant facts in an objective and balanced manner. Lessons are set in the context of the family, friends and wider societal issues and address responsibilities that arise from within these relationships. RSE at St John's will help young people to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

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. Meanwhile, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

The delivery of RSE at St John's is underpinned by the following moral and value statements:

- The delivery of RSE is factual, sensitive and balanced.
- RSE within the school promotes meaningful, loving, and healthy relationships.
- Whilst delivering RSE, staff will avoid the imposition of personal opinion. Instead they will stay focused on the social, moral, spiritual, health and education aspects of the topics.

Across the faiths, there is obviously some variation in attitudes and outlooks regarding relationships and sex. Whilst such views are not necessarily shared by all, they must receive and respect the teaching of RSE at St John's is respectful of all cultural and religious differences.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from the RSE element of the National Science Curriculum. This is the biological aspect of human growth and reproduction.

Information on sex and relationships, skills development and values clarification are taught within PSHEE.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from aspects of the RSE programme, they need to write a letter to the PSHEE Head of Department or to the Head teacher stating their reasons for the request. Parents will be invited into school to discuss their concerns regarding the programme with the relevant teaching staff in the school and to view the materials. Parents are also invited to the annual RSE consultation and both parents, staff and children are consulted whenever changes are made to the policy.

The new legislation brought in through the Children and Social Work Act 2017 brought important changes in relation to parental rights to withdraw children from school RSE. The act states:

1. Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from relationships education in primary school or secondary school.
2. At secondary school level parents will be able to withdraw their child from sex education (other than the sex education which sits in the National Curriculum as part of science in maintained schools). However, a child will also have a right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16).

### **Staffing**

The Head of PSHEE is responsible for co-ordinating RSE. RSE lessons are part of the E4L (Emotions for Learning) and PSHEE (Physical, Social, Health and Economic Education) curriculum and as such are taught by the child's PSHEE teacher in Senior House and the child's Class Teacher in Byron House. In Form 3, children also receive RSE lessons during their Science lessons, looking at puberty and menstruation. All staff are trained in the delivery of E4L as part of their induction and ongoing professional development. Those who teach PSHEE are also provided with relevant training and support with regards to RSE.

### **Safety and Confidentiality**

Staff make it clear to pupils what the School's procedures are with regard to confidentiality. Similarly, if questions are asked in class or in assembly, adults will follow agreed practice based on DfE guidance 2000. 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.

Teachers will consult the Reporting a Disclosure document which is available online and also in all teacher work and staffrooms.

How are resources used with reasons for their selection?

RSE resources are chosen and checked for:

- Being inclusive – acknowledging the full spectrum of diversity in society
- Positive, healthy and unbiased messages
- Age and understanding appropriateness.

How will St John's deal with sexually explicit questions?

St John's will:

- Allow individual staff to use their professional judgement as to answering questions in front of the whole class or individually taking into account Safeguarding Policy.
- Encourage learners to ask their parents/carers any question outside the planned programme.
- Set out clear ground rules regarding personal questions, which are agreed by staff beforehand.
- Have designated adults that pupils know of to go to if they wish to talk.

What kind of language will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in RSE lessons?

Staff will:

- Use the correct terms for all body parts
- Use clear, unequivocal language in an objective manner
- Discuss what 'slang' words mean and say that some can be seen as offensive.
- Staff will use their judgement in discussion depending on understanding and maturity level of learners.

What Ground Rules specific to RSE will St John's use?

- Respect will be shown at all times.
- The creation and agreement of ground rules will be completed as a class at the beginning of RSE lessons, facilitated by the teacher.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation of RSE**

The PSHEE Head of Department and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the curriculum covers the requirements as set out on the Government guidelines. PSHEE and E4L lessons are included in the school's annual cycle of lesson observations.

Please refer to the PSHEE handbook and policy documents for further information.

### **RSE, PSHEE and E4L curriculum coverage**

At St John's, relationships are at the heart of the children's PSHEE education. The Head of PSHEE has ensured that the [government's RSE requirements](#) have been included in the PSHEE curricula, overviews of which can be found here:

[Annual Sequence of E4L Lessons KG-F1](#)

[Annual Sequence of E4L Lessons F2](#)

[Senior House PSHEE Overview](#)

### **References**

Documents that inform the School's RSE policy include:

Education Act (1996)

Learning and Skills Act (2000)

Education and Inspections Act (2006)

Equality Act (2010)

Children and Social Work Act (2017)

Keeping Children Safe In Education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2022)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

This policy will be reviewed in January 2025.