



St John's
School Billericay

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Date: September 2024

Those Responsible: Mrs E Morgan - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

To be reviewed: August 2025

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Policy Statement

As of September 2020, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. This statutory obligation extends to independent schools.

The afore-mentioned statutory guidance also makes reference to mandatory Health Education. However, given that independent schools are not bound by this part of the guidance, being instead required to deliver Health Education under Paragraph 2 of the Independent School Standards Regulations, this Policy makes no mention thereof.

Key personnel

Mrs Amy Fleming (Deputy Head)

Mrs Emma Robinson

Mrs Jo Littlefield - Head of Junior School

Mrs Sandra Revill – Head of Kindergarten

Kindergarten and Juniors:

Relationships Education in Kindergarten and Juniors is defined as teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

Sex Education is taught in Lower 2, Upper 2 and Lower 3 (Y4, 5 and 6) and is defined as: teaching pupils how a baby is conceived and putting this in the context of the changes to the bodies of males and females that happen at puberty.

Seniors:

Relationships and Sex Education in Upper 3 to Upper 5 (Y7-Y11) is defined as: giving pupils the information necessary for them to develop healthy, respectful and loving relationships (including intimate relationships) that help them to flourish, and how to identify and resist unhealthy relationships; delivering information about human sexuality, contraception and sexual health in a fact-based and non-judgemental manner that emphasises the critical importance of consent and mutual respect.

The principal aims of RSE at St John's is:

1. to equip pupils with the knowledge, understanding, criticality and self-awareness necessary to form healthy and positive age-appropriate relationships;
2. to ensure that pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of human reproduction and sexual relationships, including, for older pupils, detailed knowledge of contraception and sexual health.

How RSE is delivered:

Rather than being taught as a separate subject, RSE is embedded into the framework of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) at the School. That said, we believe that RSE should be

set within a wider school context in which values such as respect, fidelity, tolerance and the importance of family are promoted at every opportunity.

The School also recognises that parents have a key role in teaching their children about sex and relationships, and we seek to complement rather than displace this.

In order to create a collaborative learning partnership between the teacher and his/her pupils, RSE is delivered in a fact-based, non-judgemental manner. Teachers of RSE also take care to generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any embarrassment, as well as one where a range of views can, so long as they are expressed maturely and sensitively, be tolerated and respected.

RSE is complemented by, but not delivered through the Science, GCSE Biology and Religious Studies syllabuses, with human reproduction taught in Upper 3, and puberty and contraception taught at GCSE from an exclusively physiological perspective.

Subject content of RSE:

The relevant statutory guidance obliges the School to deliver specific Relationships Education content to its pupils of primary age and specific RSE content to its pupils of secondary age. We also teach pupils in the upper juniors a minimal amount of age-appropriate sex education in addition to that covered by the science curriculum.

The following objectives set out the subject content of Relationships Education and RSE and includes all statutory content.

As with all curriculum subjects, RSE is suitably differentiated so that it is accessible to all pupils, including those with a special educational need or disability (SEND).

Subject content for Relationships Education - Kindergarten and Juniors

Relationships Education in the Kindergarten and Juniors is taught to each class by their Form teachers or other teachers as part of the PSHE syllabus.

Pupils should know...

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people- of the same or different sex- to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.

- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- 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.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- 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.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.
- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- 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.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.

- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Subject content for Sex Education in the Junior School [N.B. This is not statutory]

By the end of Lower 3, pupils should know...

- that the mature male reproductive organs produce sperm and the female ones eggs
- that a baby begins to grow in the womb when a sperm fertilises an egg
- that fertilisation happens when a man and a woman are “happy to share a specially close and loving embrace which allows the sperm to be released from the penis into the vagina”
- the changes, both physical and emotional, that happen at puberty [first covered in L2 but not in the context of sex education]
- strategies for coping successfully with these changes (both emotionally and practically)
- that changes at puberty are linked to being able to have a baby
- that it is natural, as they approach and go through puberty, to begin to “fancy” other people, but also that there is not and should not be any pressure in this respect
- that some people “fancy” people of the same sex

An important part of the programme is the opportunity for pupils freely to ask questions directly related to the subject content in a mature and sensible yet open environment. Aware that children with unanswered questions may turn to inappropriate sources of information, such questions will generally be answered fully by the teacher in front of the whole class. However, when a primary-age pupil asks a question pertaining to sex or sexuality which clearly goes beyond the syllabus or at a point when the sex education syllabus is not being delivered: the child is not made to feel uncomfortable for having asked it; the child is invited to speak to the teacher at the end of the lesson; the teacher uses his/her professional judgement to decide the extent to which he/she will answer the question; the teacher may decide to contact the child’s parents to discuss the matter further. In line with our Safeguarding Policy, if a child exhibits behaviour and/or language that is clearly oversexualised for his/her age, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed immediately.

Subject content for Relationships and Sex Education in U3-U5 (Y7-Y11)

RSE in the Senior School forms part of PSHE delivered as a timetabled subject and during form times by the form tutors to mixed-gender form groups.

Sex Education is delivered by visiting professionals or specific senior teachers within the school.

Pupils should know...

- that there are different types of committed, 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.
- 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 relationships. This includes different (nonsexual) types of relationship.
- 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 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.
- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- 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).
- 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. [N.B. same-sex relationships referred to]
- 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. [N.B. same-sex relationships referred to]
- 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.
- the distinction between gender and sex
- what it means means to be intersex, transgender and non-binary
- some of the challenges facing transgender people (e.g. gender dysphoria, use of gender segregated facilities)
- the options of hormone treatment and surgery

How RSE is monitored and evaluated

As is the case for all subjects, RSE is monitored and evaluated through a combination of Classroom Visits, discussions at staff meetings and management meetings. This monitoring is undertaken by the Head of Humanities, the Pastoral Team, the Deputy Head and the Headteacher.

Working with parents

The School consults parents regarding this Policy (see Policy Statement above) as well as taking into consideration the religious backgrounds of pupils.

The School appreciates that sex education is a contentious issue for some in society and that some parents may be concerned about what their child may or may not be taught. The School aims to be transparent about what it does and does not teach to pupils at various ages, together with the reasons why. To this end, parents of Junior pupils are provided with a powerpoint of the content of the puberty talk in advance so that they can make an informed decision. This provides the opportunity for parents to support learning in school by talking to their children about sex education.

Right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education (but not relationships education, which is compulsory for all children in all schools). In practice, very few, if any, parents at St John's exercise this right. Parents who wish to withdraw their child are asked to put their request in writing to the Headteacher. He will then typically invite the parents (and, if appropriate, the child) to talk with him in case he is able to assuage their concerns. However, the School ultimately respects the right of parents, other than in exceptional circumstances, to determine whether or not their child participates in sex education. If a pupil is withdrawn, the School upholds its responsibility to provide him/her with appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

In line with government guidance, the following applies:

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the 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 should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.