St Ives School

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

School Name: St Ives School

Dissemination: Website and staff share

Date policy to be approved by Governors: September 2026

Date policy becomes effective: Immediately

Review date: September 2028

Person responsible for Implementation and Monitoring: Assistant Headteacher

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1. Aims

The aims of RSE are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place between students, facilitated by their teacher
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of human sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop self-respect, respect for others, confidence, self-esteem and empathy
- Create and embed a positive culture around sexuality and relationships
- Teach students appropriate vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

RSE has three main elements which are at the core of our balanced RSE programmes:

Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- Learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children and the role of marriage;
- Learning the value of respect, love and care;
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- Developing self-respect and empathy and respect for others;
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- Managing conflict; and
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay;
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease.

2. Statutory Requirements

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in **section 403 of the Education Act 1996.** The delivery of RSE as outlined in this policy complies with our statutory obligations under **sections 34 & 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017:**

'Section 34 places a duty on the Secretary of State to make regulations that require all schools in England to provide relationships education to pupils receiving primary education, and relationships and sex education to pupils receiving secondary education. The duty applies in relation to academy schools and independent schools as well as maintained schools. The education must be appropriate having regard to age and religious background, and regulations must detail the circumstances in which a pupil can be excused from receiving that education.

Section 35 provides a power for the Secretary of State to make regulations that would require all schools in England to provide personal, social, health and economic education to pupils receiving primary or secondary education.'[1]

The RSE delivered at St Ives School will have due regard for the **Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education and Health Education Guidance**[2] and other relevant guidance. We will review the policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in

line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme continues to meet the needs of our pupils.

[1] *Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Get in on the Act)*
[2] *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers*

3. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder - all parents/carers are able to comment or contribute to the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared and ratified

Parents and carers are informed about the policy through the school website, which has all school policies listed:

https://www.stivesschool.net/web/policies/630696

Parents/carers who would like a hard copy may request one by contacting the appropriate school reception.

4. Definition

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[3].

We take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way and supports gender equity and human rights.

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 (as per Section 8 of this policy). 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.[4]

To cover the curriculum content outlined in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our pupils to build positive and respectful relationships online and offline. We seek to ensure that it gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- manage their health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal and sexual identity and the personal/sexual identities of others
- understand family structures, committed relationships and the legal status of different types of long-term relationships
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives

[3] The definition for Relationships Education and Sex Education are model definitions created by the Sex Education Forum.

[4] This text is taken from the Sex Education Forum.

High quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but instead builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Evidence shows that effective RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

5. Curriculum

The curriculum for St Ives School is set out in Appendix A, but this may be adapted to reflect emerging issues pertaining to the school or community.

The subject lead has developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. We will meet the learning objectives and content outlined in the **Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education and Health Education Guidance**[5].

All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Equality, inclusion and social justice

RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSE programme is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to an RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LBGTQIA+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the **SEND Code of Practice**

[5] Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers

2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE. An inclusive RSE at TPAT secondary schools will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the **Equality Act 2010.**

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is delivered as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all key stages, using a spiral curriculum approach. The subject lead will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas (science, computing, PE) to ensure a holistic and joined up approach to what is taught in RSE.

We also supplement learning through using a whole school approach and utilising time outside of the classroom, such as in school assemblies, through art and drama, school celebrations or events. RSE will address aspects of relationships and sex in an integrated way within a single topic. We also use external agencies where appropriate to deliver aspects of Relationships and Sex Education these include (but are not exclusive to) Devon & Cornwall Police and We are With You.

The programme will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (for example when teaching about external body parts). School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when teaching RSE.

Areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LBGTQIA+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

In the event of remote learning protocols being introduced, subject leads will review the planned curriculum and adjust content to ensure it is appropriate for remote delivery methods.

All staff who have responsibility for delivering RSE will undergo training on a regular basis to ensure they are up-to-date with the RSE policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSE. In addition to ongoing training, CPD will also be scheduled in response to updates to our RSE scheme of work and any new development in terms of course content.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who require further training or support to confidently teach RSE should discuss this with the subject leader for RSE/PSHE.

Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat the views of others with respect, empathy and sensitivity.

8. Right to Withdraw

As outlined within the **Statutory Guidance**, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part 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.
- Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum.
- Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education.

All children will have the right to opt into sex education three terms before they turn 16 and the school will make arrangements 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.[6]

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.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the Parent/Carer Form **(Appendix B)** of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

[6] The information above is based on the Relationships, RSE and Health Education guidance that became statutory from September 2020. For secondary schools, a parent can withdraw their child from some or all of sex education. For more information please see: gov.uk/ government/publications/sex-and-relationship-education

The Headteacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum and the school will keep a record of this. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Except in exceptional circumstances, 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 make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

9. Training

Staff are trained in the delivery of RSE as part of their professional development. Whole staff training, as appropriate, is included in our school training programme. Subject leads will support staff to identify specific training needs and provide advice and support.

The Subject Leader for PSHE may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the subject leaders for PSHE/RSE through regular monitoring of all aspects of provision in this area. This includes but is not limited to:

- School culture and behaviour around school
- Feedback from tutors and teachers
- Feedback from LSAs and non-teaching staff
- Parental surveys and feedback
- School and subject development planning
- Lesson visits to PSHE/RSE lessons
- Learning walks

- Student voice
- Student work scrutiny
- Pastoral leads feedback
- Safeguarding leads feedback

Students' responses to RSE are monitored by class teachers as part of our school assessment systems as well as through student voice surveys. Student voice is an essential and valued part of our routine provision review which helps further develop the RSE curriculum. Student voice surveys are conducted three times per year in RSE/PSHE; this allows students to express ideas and opinions about topics which they feel are important to their education and personal development.

This policy is reviewed bi-annually by the subject lead for PSHE/RSE in consultation with staff and school leaders. Policy amendments are subject to approval by the governing body.

12. Safeguarding and Child Protection

TPAT acknowledges that RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.[7]

RSE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse, or have experienced, abuse.

We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures.

We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or

[7] Statutory guidance
Keeping children safe in education
Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment.

changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.

13. Linked Policies

This policy supports and complements the following policies:

- Safeguarding
- British Values
- Careers Education
- Anti-bullying policy
- Online policy
- Teaching and Learning
- Behaviour
- Sexual Harassment
- Child on Child Abuse

Appendices

APPENDIX A: ST IVES SCHOOL RSE CURRICULUM

Year 7

RSE	**What does a good relationship look like?**	**What is personal identity? How does this relate to British Values?**
		How do we maintain good friendships that are positive and safe?
		What happens when we fall in and out of love? How do we deal with family relationships?
		Is it bullying or banter? What is and how do we deal with cyberbullying?
		What is radicalisation, extremism and terrorism and how are these different?

Year 8

RSE	**What are the dangers of unhealthy relationships (physical and emotional)?**	**What is consent?**
		What is contraception? What are the consequences of not using it?
		What are the dangers of pornography and sexting?
		What is body image?
		What is child on child abuse? (sexual harassment, abuse, cyberbullying, sexting, upskirting et al)
		How do we deal with sexual harassment and abuse at St Ives (lesson TBC)

Year 9

RSE	**What are the dangers of negative relationships?**	**How do I look? (body image - female and non-binary focus)**
		Is the media to blame for eating disorders?
		It's not just a slap…domestic abuse including coercion, control, threats and violence
		What is sexual exploitation
		…HBV…forced marriage? Q&A - Teacher discretion based on matters arising from content of previous lessons

Year 10

RSE	**Do I have healthy relationships?**	**What is harassment and stalking? (2 lessons)**
		Is there anything wrong with porn? What is revenge porn? (2 lessons)
		What is peer on peer abuse? (sexual harassment, abuse, cyberbullying, sexting, upskirting et al)
		Are we a sexist and gender prejudiced society?
		Q&A

Year 11

RSE	**What is 'good' sex?**	**What is safe sex, chem sex and good sex? (2 lessons)**
		Let's be clear about…consent, rape and sexual abuse

APPENDIX B: PARENT/CARER FORM: WITHDRAWAL FROM SEX EDUCATION WITHIN RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Tutor group	
Name of parent/Carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent.Carer signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	