



## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Empathy, Respect, Forgiveness and Responsibility

Committee Responsible:	Curriculum Committee
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## **Mission Statement**

At St Regis CE Academy

we believe that everyone is unique and created in God's image.

We enable all to achieve their God-given potential;

to grow, learn and aspire;

to transform their lives and the lives of others

and to journey in faith without limits

within a unified, respectful and harmonious community.

### **'Aspire, Believe and Achieve Together'**

Aspire to be the best that we can be... Believe that anything is possible... Achieve beyond what we ever imagined...

- ◆ Learn and worship in the name of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and value, respect and celebrate all faiths and cultures.
- ◆ Believe in themselves and become successful adult – developing their vision, faith, ambition and aspirations.
- ◆ Develop a resilience and inner strength to overcome life challenges.
- ◆ Embrace life-enriching experiences and make well-informed lifestyle choices that promote health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Develop thinking skills and transferrable skills, working in partnership to become life-long learners.

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## **The Developmental Process**

The school participates in the 'Wolverhampton Children and Young People's Health Related Behaviour Survey', which is conducted bi-annually by the Director of Public Health in Wolverhampton, as it provides the school with valuable contextualised data concerning the health and well-being of our students in a number of areas.

This policy has been created in conjunction with the Principal, the PHSE Co-ordinator, the Associate Assistant Principal for Science, the School Nurses team, Parents, Governors and S4S Schools Services, who were all consulted in the creation of this document.

### WHAT IS RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of family life, stable and loving relationships, including marriage, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health with a focus on dealing with emotions and managing personal relationships. RSE also gives young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline. It provides opportunities for young people to reflect on their own attitude's values and beliefs and those of their peers and others.

- Sex and Relationships Education is a partnership between home and school
- RSE ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- Starts early and is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
- Is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, pleasure, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
- Includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- Has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- Helps pupils understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation
- Is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable fact of life
- Is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- Uses active learning methods, and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated
- Helps pupils understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media
- Teaches pupils about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16 and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations
- Promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs
- It contributes to a positive ethos and environment for learning

## **Policy Aims**

This policy aims to clarify our schools' approach to RSE and any curriculum provision so that it is clear to all of our school community.

The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health.

For example, pupils should:

- Develop skills to respect themselves and others for who they are, not what they have and what they can do
- Understand the positive benefits of loving and responsible relationships
- Develop and use communication skills and personal safety skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media by learning how to resist unwanted pressures to be sexually active
- Learn about and understand the impact of exploitation, coercion and violence in order to understand that consent is critical in a relationship
- Develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- Have enough information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV

Although the RSE curriculum content covers factual teaching (biology, medicine, the law, marriage, different types of families and the composition of society) and the moral teaching about relationships, we clearly differentiate between the two. We recognise that the distinction can be easily blurred and there needs to be discernment about the manner in which this is taught within a moral (but not moralistic) framework.

## **2020 Statutory Guidance:**

As a school, we welcomed this policy and engaged in a process of consultation with advisors, parents, pupils and colleagues which has resulted in a new PSHE Scheme of Work, fully compliant with the statutory requirements. We believe that it will further strengthen our ability to help our pupils be safe, happy and prepared to participate fully and flourish in life beyond school.

## **Legislation and Linked Policies**

All primary and secondary schools, including special schools and pupil referral units / alternative provision, are required by section 404 of the Education Act 1996 to have an up-to-date policy for RSE.

The school RSE policy supports/complements the following school policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Values and British Values Policy

Documents and legal requirements that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2018) Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Valuing all God's Children (2017) [Valuing All God's Children](#)
- The Church of England RSE Charter [Church of England RSHE Charter](#)
- The Church of England 'Pastoral Principles for living well together' [Church of England Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together](#)

### **Values Framework**

This RSE policy and our approach to the subject is reflective and supportive of the ethos of St Regis CE Academy. Because of the personal and social nature of the topics covered in RSE, values and attitudes are a central part of learning and moral development.

There are clear values that underpin RSE including:

- Mutual respect
- The value of family life, marriage\* and of loving and stable relationships in bringing up children
- Rights and responsibilities for self and others
- Commitment to safety and wellbeing
- Gender equality
- Acceptance of diversity, and
- That violence and coercion in relationships is unacceptable

(\*As part of sex and relationships education, children & young people should be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children. However, the Government recognises – as in the Home Office, Ministerial Group on the Family consultation document Supporting Families - that there are strong and mutually supportive building blocks of community and society. Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances. School will also be mindful of our responsibilities under law, such as those within the Equalities Act).

The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff delivering RSE will not influence the teaching of the subject in St Regis CE Academy.

In both the design and delivery of RSE we also ask staff to consider the 'Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together' published by the Pastoral Advisory Group and the Church of England. These are:

- Acknowledge Prejudice
- Speak into Silence
- Address Ignorance
- Cast out Fear
- Admit Hierocracy

- Pay attention to Power

## **The Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationships Education Coordination and Planning**

Extract from 'Valuing all God's Children':

Opportunities to discuss issues to do with self-esteem, gender identity, and anti-bullying including HBT bullying should be included in physical, social, health and economic education or citizenship programmes. The curriculum should offer opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves and their bodies. Relationships and sex education should take LGBT people into account. Sexual orientation should be included within RSE in the secondary phase. The Church of England's teaching on human sexuality and a range of Christian views should be taught, as well as a range of perspectives from other faiths and world views.

At St Regis CE Academy, RSE is embedded in the PSHE curriculum as an explicit programme of study, organised by the Head of PSHE and delivered by a team of teachers. Content is taught so that learning can be built up in a way that is appropriate to the age and maturity of each child. There may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages and/or those with SEND. Programmes of study will reflect the needs of students as identified in consultation with the Safeguarding Team and School Nurse. Where necessary external agencies will be involved in order to support work and curriculum development etc. The school uses the local Wolverhampton 'Delivering RSE in the Modern World' Resource for years 7-11. The resources we use in school are designed to provide a framework in which children & young people can develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about RSE and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions.

Curriculum content will build on prior learning from primary school and will introduce new content to older pupils at appropriate points. This should enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used pejoratively. This knowledge should enable pupils to understand where normal variations in emotions and physical complaints end and health and wellbeing issues begin. Students will be taught in mixed gender classes in both KS3 and KS4 unless any specific lessons/topics require pupils to be separated by gender

### **Teaching Strategies**

A range of teaching methods which involve children and young people's full participation are used to teach effective RSE. Ground rules are set at the beginning of each RSE module and inappropriate questions or behaviour will be dealt with individually after the lesson. Teaching staff will endeavour to answer questions as openly as possible but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom (or in line with the school's RSE policy), provision would be made to meet the individual young person's needs. This may involve referring the student back to their parent/carer or seeking advice from the PSHE Coordinator, or the Senior Pastoral Lead or the Safeguarding Manager). All teaching resources will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the values set out in the RSE policy.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation of RSE**

It is the responsibility of the Head of PSHE to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of RSE/PSHE in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying factors. Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we regularly review the RSE curriculum and will inform early in the school year, and prior to beginning any RSE lessons, parents and carers will receive a letter detailing the times of the topics being studied and where more detail can be found on the school VLE together with an invitation to a meeting where the detail and rationale can be discussed and concerns can be raised and responded to.

## **Confidentiality and Safeguarding**

The classroom is never a confidential place to talk, and that remains true in relationships and sex education. Pupils must be reminded that lessons are not an appropriate place to discuss their personal experiences and issues, this should be reinforced through the establishment of clear ground rules.

Any visitor to the classroom is bound by the school's safeguarding policy, regardless of whether they, or their organisation, has a different policy; visitors will be made aware of this.

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Members of staff and the Child Protection Officer/Deputies are not legally bound to inform parents of any disclosure unless the Head teacher has specifically requested them to do so. Pupils will be made aware that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Safeguarding issues will be considered by the Safeguarding Manager under the school's relevant procedures.

## **Visitors and Outside Agencies**

Visitors to school, health professionals and members of voluntary organisations may be invited to plan and contribute to SRE lessons. A teacher/member of staff will always be present during the lesson.

All visitors to the classroom should be familiar with and work within the school's RSE policy. The PSHE coordinator/teacher should ensure that the contribution of visitors fits within the scheme of work for RSE and enhances learning. Responsibility for RSE lies with the school, and the input from a visitor will never be a substitute for a planned and coordinated school RSE curriculum.

## **Specific Issues Statements**

- INCLUSION

It is our intention all students can experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age, cognitive and physical development, with differentiated provision if required.

- IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of gender identity and sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing identity or sexuality need to feel that RSE is relevant to them and, as such, staff will ensure resources refer to a range of identities and relationships.

As part of our efforts to teach about the diversity that exists in the world today, teaching about people with different protected characteristics, including LGBT people, makes sure that all children and young people see their family and identities reflected in what they learn, ensuring that they feel welcome and included. Teaching about all the protected characteristics, including LGBT people and people of different faiths, also supports schools to meet their legal equalities duties.

Students that consider themselves transgender or are transitioning from one gender to another will be treated in school in accordance with the gender identity that they assign themselves. This includes access to the relevant toilets. Any bullying around gender identity (including transgender), sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation arising from this prejudice will be dealt with as a serious matter as all students and staff are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

- RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL BELIEFS

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the diverse needs of students for them to have full access to the content of RSE. We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people, it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular topics in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns as appropriate.

- SOURCES OF ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Students can access support in school and are also signposted to appropriate national and local sources. The role of the School Nurse is to provide confidential and impartial health help and advice to students and staff within the remit of local child protection guidelines. They can give specific contraceptive advice and can assist students in accessing local services. They are under no legal obligation to discuss information with any member of staff. In addition, students have access to the Vice-Principal – Personal Development and Well-being, the Heads of Year, and their own form tutors.

### **Withdrawal of Students from RSE and Complaints Procedure**

Hundreds of faith schools, church schools and schools with faith pupil majorities are already teaching about people with all different backgrounds, including LGBT people, to help meet their legal duties and ensure that all pupils feel included. They're committed to tackling anti-LGBT bullying, and promoting respect for people with all different backgrounds, because of the values of love, respect, tolerance and understanding that lie at the heart of all major religions.

Current legislation states that 'parents have the right to withdraw their children (up to age 19) from any and every aspect of sex education that is not taught as part of the statutory curriculum'.

The guidance states at secondary level, 'before granting any such request it is good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents' – including 'discussing with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in classes'.

Our school seeks to work in partnership with parents and carers to provide effective RSE/PSHE support for children and young people. The school's RSE programme endeavours to complement and support parent's and carer's roles.

Some parents prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. They have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the relationship and sex education except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons). We would make alternative arrangements for students who are withdrawn elsewhere in the school in such cases.

Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with designated staff at the earliest opportunity. Parents are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses.

Should a parent or carer want to make a complaint regarding the SRE programme, the complaints procedure should be followed. This is freely available on the school website. At St Regis, we understand sex education (as opposed to relationships education, where there is no right of withdrawal) to include lessons which deal with acts of sexual intercourse (including safe and unsafe sex), contraception, STIs, puberty and the menstrual cycle, the dangers, damage and laws around sexting and pornography, fertility and reproductive health, pregnancy, miscarriage and abortion.

Of these, the topics not already covered in science lessons and therefore applicable to the right of withdrawal are:

- Year 8 – Contraception, pornography and sexting
- Year 10 – Revenge porn
- Year 11 – Safe and unsafe sex, pregnancy, miscarriage and abortion

### **Dissemination of the Policy**

A hard copy of the policy can be found in the school office. All staff will have access to an electronic copy, and it is made available on the school website for parents and other stakeholders to refer to if needed.