



## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

### RATIONALE

*To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Students can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.*

DfE Statutory Guidance

### Policy aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure that appropriate RSE provision is in place so that students may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

The RSE provision aims to:

- raise students' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media.
- teach students to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender identity, physical and emotional abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. This will lead to a clear understanding of diversity and inclusion, the prevention of gender-based and homophobic, biphobic or transphobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships.
- help students to understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation.
- encourage students to seek information or support and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice, both during their time at TGS and after.

The School wants parents and students to feel assured that RSE will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of students, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the RSE provision. A full list of topics that will be covered through the RSE provision is available in Appendix 1. We continually review the curriculum in response to feedback from parents, students and staff.

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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Review level: Head Teacher

## **Statutory Requirements**

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all students under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we're 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](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

**The Head Teacher through their delegated representative is responsible for:**

- ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school
- managing requests to withdraw students from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (sex education).
- ensuring that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with the School's policy and guidance relating to RSE.
- communicating freely with staff, parents and the Trustees to ensure that the policy is understood and that any concerns or opinions regarding the School's provision are listened to, considered and acted on where appropriate.

**School staff are expected to:**

- ensure that they are up to date with the School's policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSE. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to the Personal Development Learning (PDL) Lead.
- attend and engage in relevant Form Tutor sessions relating to RSE provision.
- encourage students to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them sensitively. If a student comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they should take this concern to a Student Support Co-ordinator, the School Nurse, the Safeguarding Officer or one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) if there is a safeguarding risk.
- provide regular feedback to the PDL Lead on their experience of teaching RSE and student response.
- ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE activities to students.
- tailor their sessions to suit all students in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those with special educational needs. If teachers need support in this area, they should speak to their relevant Curriculum Director or SENCO.

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### **The Personal Development Learning (PDL) Lead is responsible for:**

- ensuring that RSE is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups.
- ensuring that the knowledge and information regarding RSE, to which all students are entitled, is planned in a comprehensive way.
- providing support to staff members in their delivery of RSE to students.

### **Curriculum Directors are responsible for:**

- supporting the PDL Lead in the planning and delivery of learning activities for their year groups.
- supporting the PDL Lead in monitoring teaching and learning in PHSE sessions.

### **Students are expected to:**

- be considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs. Students who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy.
- be encouraged and feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, regarding any concerns they have relating to RSE. Staff must consult the DSLs if there is a child protection concern or they feel ill-equipped to deal with the issue at hand.
- provide feedback on the School's Personal, Health, Social and Economic Education (PHSE) provision through school council. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by the PDL Lead and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's students. In this way, the School hopes to provide students with the education they need on topics they want to learn about, whilst meeting its statutory duty.

### **Parents are responsible for:**

- sharing the responsibility of RSE and supporting their children's personal, social and emotional development.
- seeking to create an open home environment where students can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through PHSE activities.
- being vigilant and responsive to concerns relating to inappropriate material available or viewed on-line.
- seeking additional support from the School where they feel it is needed.

### **Implementation and Curriculum**

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.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health and consent

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For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

There is a cross-curricular approach to the delivery of RSE (e.g. topics in Biology, Religious Studies, Physical Health Education (PHE) and drop down PSHE sessions). Staff and guest speakers use resources that are specific to the age of the students in their classes.

Possible conflicts arising between the curriculum and religious views (such as those relating to the use of contraception) are acknowledged; RSE is delivered at every stage with sensitivity and in cooperation and inclusion with different views and religions.

Providing advice on contraception and practising safe sex is a key part of the School's RSE provision. We also encourage parents to engage their child in open discussion about practising safe sex.

### **Inclusivity**

We promote the School's ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of the curriculum and hope that students respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all students' experiences
- During lessons, makes students feel:
  - Safe and supported
  - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
  - A whole-class setting
  - Small groups or targeted sessions
  - 1-to-1 discussions
  - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

### **Use of resources**

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

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## **Guest Speakers**

We may invite guest speakers to talk on issues related to relationships and sex. It is our experience that certain subjects are better received when delivered by an expert or experienced health professionals (such as the Kent School Nurse Team or legal professionals focusing on consent) who can challenge student's knowledge and perceptions. A member of staff will always be present throughout these lessons. Visiting speakers will be given a copy of this policy and expected to comply with the guidelines outlined within it.

The School will exercise extreme caution when working with external agencies and proceed only if we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses. We will take particular care that an external agency and any materials used are appropriate and:

- are in line with the School's legal duties regarding political impartiality.
- do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- are age-appropriate and aligned to the developmental stage of the students being taught.
- uses evidence-based robust facts and statistics from a credible source.

When deciding on the external agencies and resources to use, we will make appropriate checks to ensure that the agencies' approach and the resources that they plan to use comply with:

- the School's policy
- the Teaching Standards
- the Equality Act 2010
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Education Act 1996

The School will review any case study material used by an external agency in advance and look for feedback from others they have worked with. We will make sure we know the named individuals who will be there, any need for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and that there is an agreed protocol should any safeguarding issue arise, for example from a disclosure.

We are aware that topics involving gender and biological sex can be complex and sensitive matters to navigate. Whilst adhering to DfE guidance we will not reinforce harmful stereotypes, for instance by suggesting that children might be a different gender based on their personality and interests or appearance. Resources used in teaching about this topic will be age-appropriate and evidence based. We will not use materials which suggest that non-conformity to gender stereotypes should be seen as synonymous with having a different gender identity. We will not work with external agencies or organisations that produce such material.

## **Terminology**

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health is important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices. This should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Schools have the freedom to develop an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of their young people.

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Students will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles may be discussed; this will accompany a discussion about what is and is not acceptable language to use.

### **Dealing with Difficult Questions**

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- an anonymous question box; this will enable students to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified.
- making the classroom a zone of silence. This means that whatever is discussed in the classroom stays in the classroom and should not be inappropriately brought up at any other time. We hope this will give students the sense that they are in a safe zone to speak freely about relationships and sex.

There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or unable to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the relevant Curriculum Director in the first instance and they will liaise with the PDL Lead.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusive Delivery of RSE**

Schools have a clear duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSE fosters good relations between students, tackles all types of prejudice – including homophobia, biphobia, transphobia – and promotes understanding and respect, enabling schools to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit of the Equality Act 2010.

All children and young people, whatever their experience, background and identity are entitled to quality RSE that helps them build confidence and a positive sense of self, and to stay healthy. To encourage all students to participate in activities, deliverers should ensure content, approach, and use of inclusive language reflect the diversity of our community and help every student to feel valued and included in the classroom. Sexual health information is inclusive and will include LGBT people in case studies and scenarios enabling students to explore topics from different points of view.

RSE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual relationships. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.

### **Withdrawal from RSE**

The School aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the School will do everything it can to ensure that parents are comfortable with the education provided to their children.

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Parents will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 – the legal age of school consent.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE should contact the relevant Student Adviser in the first instance. The Head Teacher or their delegated representative is responsible for agreeing to the withdrawal of a student.

RSE is a vital part of the School's curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of their education. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) are important for all children to be taught.

### **Complaints**

Parents or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the RSE curriculum should contact the relevant Student Support Co-ordinator and follow the School's Complaint Policy.

### **Safeguarding and Confidentiality**

We provide a safe and supportive community where students feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the child protection and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Students with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the DSLs to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

### **Support**

General resources and links for both students and parents are available on the wellbeing section of the School's website. These include how to access support from the School Nurse.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The School will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from students, staff and parents, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from the Department of Education, national reports and curriculum reviews.

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## **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**

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*We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for students with protected characteristics. This forms part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.*

### **Link Policies:**

Curriculum Policy  
Child Protection Policy  
Anti-bullying Policy  
Equality Statement  
SEND Policy  
Complaints Policy  
Behaviour Policy

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<b>Families</b>	<p>Students should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.</li><li>• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.</li><li>• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li><li>• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>
<b>Respectful relationships, including friendships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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 (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li><li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li><li>• 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).</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</li><li>• that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li><li>• what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>

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<p><b>Online and media</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.</li> <li>• about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.</li> <li>• not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.</li> <li>• what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.</li> <li>• the impact of viewing harmful content.</li> <li>• that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.</li> <li>• that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.</li> <li>• how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Being safe</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.</li> <li>• that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.</li> <li>• that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</li> <li>• the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.</li> <li>• the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.</li> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.</li> <li>• how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.</li> <li>• how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.</li> </ul>

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<b>Changing adolescent body</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.</li><li>• the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.</li><li>• key facts about the menstrual cycle including what is an average period, range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health.</li></ul>
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