

Sex & Relationships Policy



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Owner: Mr J Kneen

The governors and staff of Priestnall School believe that effective Relationships and Sex education is vital in helping students embrace the challenges of a happy and successful adulthood.¹ The school aim to provide a setting in which students can be offered effective and appropriate teaching about relationships and sex education. We seek to help students prepare for adult life by supporting them through their physical, emotional, moral and spiritual development. It is our aim to help students within the school to understand themselves, respect others and form healthy relationships, equipping them to make informed decisions².

What is Relationships Education?

Guidance has been provided to Primary schools on providing Relationships Education, where there the focus is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships; focusing on family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults³. Relationships Education should also consider resilience and positive character attributes, how to take turns, treating each other with kindness, consideration and respect, honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. These should be considered in an age-appropriate manner and take into consideration both online and 'real world' contexts⁴. Relationships Education (and elements of RSE) can help safeguard children by focusing on boundaries and privacy and by teaching how to seek advice and report concerns, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse⁵. Relationships and Sex education should support children's emotional and physical development and consider the changes adolescence brings⁶. Whilst Relationships and Sex Education is recommended by the Department of Education, it is not compulsory. At Priestnall we seek to build on Relationships and Sex Education provision at Primary schools and ensure coverage of all essential areas in year 7 where there has been no provision at Primary School⁷.

¹ Based on introduction preamble of Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance document July 2018 Department of Education.

² Based on introduction of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

³ Paragraph 50 RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

⁴ Paragraphs 51-56 RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

⁵ Paragraph 57 and tables on page 16-17 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

⁶ Paragraph 62 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

⁷ Paragraph 63 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

What is Relationships and Sex Education?

High Quality Relationships and Sex Education helps create school communities in which students can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons.

- Children and young people have a right to a good quality education, as set out on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child⁸.
- Children and young people need to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships⁹.
- RSE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding obligations, as they have a preventative programme that enables students to learn about safety and risks in a relationship. Schools maintain a statutory obligation under law^{10 11 12 13} to prepare children and young people of the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.
- A comprehensive RSE programme can have a positive impact of students' health and wellbeing, supporting the students spiritual, moral, social, cultural mental and physical development¹⁴.

Relationships and Sex Education in Priestnall School does not seek to encourage early sexual experimentation, but to teach students to understand human sexuality, respect themselves and others, enable them to grown in maturity, confidence and self-esteem, understand reasons for delaying sexual activity and support people to develop safe, healthy and fulfilling sexual relationships at the appropriate time¹⁵.

What is High Quality Relationships and Sex Education?

Relationship and Sex Education is:

- A partnership between home and school
- A progression in learning from primary school Relationships Education¹⁶.

⁸ UNCRC resolution 44/25 by General Assembly, 20th Nov 1989

⁹ Sex and Relationships, Are You Getting It? United Kingdom Youth Parliament 2007.

¹⁰ Children's Act 2004

¹¹ Children and Social Work Act 2017

¹² Education Act 1996

¹³ The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance document. DfE 2018

¹⁴ Introduction of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

¹⁵ Paragraph 66 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

¹⁶ Paragraph 68 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

- Delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, allowing young people to ask questions in a safe environment¹⁷.
- Is appropriate to the relevant age and key stage of students. Progressing in understanding through key stage 3 and 4. This includes using resources and images that are both age appropriate and culturally appropriate for students¹⁸.
- Is taught by people who are trained and confident about issues such as health and unhealthy relationships, equality, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent.
- Includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values.
- Helps students understand online and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation.¹⁹
- Ensures that students are protected from unsuitable online material.
- Is both medically and factually accurate.
- Is inclusive of difference, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, culture, age, faith, belief or other life experience.
- Uses active and innovative learning methods which are planned, assessed and developed.
- Helps students understand the range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society, including addressing gender, sex and sexuality and considering different sources including media, social media and online sources²⁰.
- Teaches a student about the law and their rights with concern to Relationships and Sex, and their rights to confidentiality, even if they are under 16 and are linked to school-based and community health services and organisations.
- Is not aimed at making students more likely to enter into sexual activity, but understand the potential risks of sexual activity and the advantages of delaying such activity²¹.
- Promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects different gender experiences and needs^{22 23}

¹⁷ Paragraph 67 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

¹⁸ Paragraph 66 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

¹⁹ Introduction Paragraph 8 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

²⁰ Introduction Paragraph 8 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE

Paragraph 66 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE

²² Reference to Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st century

²³ Changed to reflect a non-binary perspective of gender.

Policy Formation and Consultation Process

This policy has been compiled in consultation with regard to:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Learning and Skills Act 2000
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance document 2018
- The Children's Act 2004
- SRE for the 21st Century – Guidance document
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice document)
- Equality Act 2010
- Schools SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice document)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice document)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools (advice document)
- The Equality and Human rights Commission Advice and Guidance (advice document)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in Schools (statutory guidance)

It has been produced by the Head of Beliefs and Values in consultation with parents, governors, the Designated safeguarding Lead, the Headteacher and senior leaders within the school. The draft policy has been made available to staff for consultation. Comment and opinion has been sought from the Student Leadership Team²⁴. Following consultation a final draft policy was submitted to the governing body for approval and implementation.

Aims and Objectives

The school aims to provide opportunities for students to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of issues that will help them become confident and independent adults, and effective citizens making contributions to the

²⁴ Adjusted to reflect changes in the organisation of student leadership and representation in the school.

wider society²⁵. Through the provision of Relationships and Sex Education the school works to provide all students with the opportunity to learn about safety in forming and maintaining relationships; the characteristics of healthy relationships, and how relationships may affect physical and mental health and well-being at an age-appropriate level and with regard for the religious background of the students²⁶. This includes keeping themselves safe from relevant risks, such as abuse, sexual exploitation, extremism, use of the internet and social media²⁷.

We seek to teach information on relationships and sex through and understanding, factual and accepting approach. Ensuring different viewpoints are considered and the law is clearly outlined.²⁸ Lessons and materials used will be age appropriate. Parents will have access to the policy through the school website and to lesson information and teaching materials on request. Provision of Relationships and Sex Education will be through Beliefs and Values lessons. The focus of these lessons will include the development of personal learning and thinking skills, social and emotional aspects of learning and spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Cross-curricular contributions:-

Some elements of Relationships and Sex Educations are taught in other areas of the schools' curriculum. Teaching on reproduction in humans, including the structure and functions of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycles, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS are required to be taught as part of the National Curriculum and there is no right of withdrawal from any part of this curriculum. Beliefs and Values lessons consider the aspects of medical ethics, abortion, fertility treatment, prejudice and discrimination, relationships, marriage and family. IT and computing lessons address online use and online safety. These cross-curricular links are developed and reviewed regularly as part of mapping subject coverage for RSE and safeguarding across the curriculum²⁹.

Assessment and monitoring:-

²⁵ Changes taking into consideration developments into adulthood mentioned in RERSEHE Guidance Document.

²⁶ Children and Social Work Act 2017 Section 4 para 34 (a) and (b).

²⁷ Ofsted (2015) Common Inspection Framework: Education Skills and Early years p14

²⁸ Paragraph 72 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

²⁹ Safeguarding Across the Curriculum Audit and the RSE audit documents.

The Head of Beliefs and Values is responsible for co-ordinating the policy and curriculum content, and is accountable to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher accordingly. The teaching of Relationships and Sex Education will be assessed, monitored and evaluated through regular lesson observations, learning walks³⁰, ongoing assessment for learning strategies and the review of lesson planning annually. The contributions of external specialist agencies and speakers will be supervised and monitored on a regular basis by qualified specialist teaching staff.

The policy will be monitored each academic year and formally reviewed bi-annually, being revised through the Governing Body where necessary. The Office for Standards in Education is required to assess the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students during inspections. This includes the Relationships and Sex Education provision and policies.

Relationships and Sex Education Teaching:-

Relationships and Sex Education is taught in a programme designed to build on understanding throughout a young person's education. All Relationships and Sex Education lessons are designed, taught or supported by a specialist from within the Beliefs and Values department.

Curriculum Content:-

Our Relationships and Sex Education curriculum, integrated into Beliefs and Values lessons focuses on the following areas of learning:

Families:-

- Different types of committed, stable relationships
- How these relationships may contribute to human happiness and their importance in bringing up children.
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships, their legal rights and protections in contrast to cohabitation.
- Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- Characteristics and legal status of other types of relationship.
- Roles and responsibilities of parents and the raising of children.

³⁰ As an additional measure for quality assurance

- Judging trustworthiness of peers, adults, and other sources of information.
- Judging when family, friends, intimate or other relationships are unsafe (and recognising it in others' relationships)
- How to seek help and advice. How to report concerns about others if needed.³¹

Respectful Relationships (Including Friendships):-

- Characteristics of positive, healthy friendships (on and offline), including trust, respect, honesty, boundaries, privacy, consent, conflict management, reconciliation, ending relationships (including non-sexual relationships).
- How stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability can affect relationships (in terms of consensual behaviour and prejudice).
- Encouraging the expectation to be treated with respect by others, and show due tolerance and respect to the beliefs and attitudes of others in return (including those in positions of authority)
- Different types of bullying (online and offline), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders, where and how to get help.
- Domestic abuse in its various forms, and how some types of behaviour in relationships can be criminal, including violence and coercion.
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are unacceptable.
- The uniqueness and equality of all people, particularly in light of the protected characteristics including legal rights and responsibilities established in the Equality Act 2010³².

Online and Media:-

- Rights, responsibilities and rights online, including expectations of behaviour relating to online use.
- Online risks, including the sharing of online material and the difficulties of removing potentially compromising online material. Guidance on avoiding sharing personal material, including the personal material of others.
- How to manage issues online and where to seek help.

³¹ Developed in conjunction with the Table of subject content on p21-23 RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

³² Equality Act 2010, Crown copyright.

- The impact of viewing harmful content.
- The distortion picture of self-image and relationships presented in sexually explicit material online, including 'pornography', and the negative impact it can have on self and others behaviour towards sexual partners.
- Ensuring understanding that sharing and viewing of indecent images of children (including those created by children) is against the law.
- Understanding how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being Safe:-

- Laws relating to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, and domestic abuse, and how these affect current and future relationships.
- Active and assertive communication of consent or non-consent, including sexual consent; how to recognise consent with others and how/when consent can be withdrawn (both online and offline).

Intimate and Sexual Relationships, Including Sexual Health:-

- Recognising characteristics and positive aspects of healthy, one-to-one intimate relationships including mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- The implications on health of choice about sex and relationships, including physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- Reproductive health including fertility and the impact of lifestyle on the fertility of men and women.
- Strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, peer pressure. How to resist pressure and avoid putting pressure on others.
- Reinforcing individuals have the choice to delay sex or enjoy intimacy without sex.
- Contraceptive choices and the options available, including key facts and implications on health.
- Pregnancy and miscarriage.
- Choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically, legally and impartial information on all options including keeping a child, adoption, abortion and where to seek further help).

- Transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STI's) including HIV/AIDS, how risks can be reduced through safer sex (including condom use) and the facts and importance of testing.
- The prevalence of STI's, treatments and the impact on those who contract them.
- The effects of drugs and alcohol on decision making and sexual behaviour.
- Seeking confidential advice on sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

SEND Provision:-

Specific provision is often made for individual **SEND** Students to ensure Relationships and Sex Education is taught in a way that considers each student's specific needs and helps develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Some provision may be in small group, whilst some students may receive individual support by a member of the Beliefs and Values team along with the student's teaching assistant. SEND students will not be withdrawn from Relationships and Sex Education lessons without an alternative and personalised provision being made.

Looked After Children's Provision: -

The provision of Relationships and Sex Education to Vulnerable and Looked After children will be arranged in consultation with carers and agencies involved in supporting the student.

Priestnall school works closely with other schools, Stockport Borough Council Sex and Relationship Team, Sexual Health nurses and the school nurse, along with other agencies may be invited on occasion to support the teaching of the Relationships and Sex curriculum. In such cases all agencies will be made aware of this policy and how their contribution relates to the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education in the school, including confidentiality issues, monitoring, and evaluation of their contributions afterwards. No visitor will work with students in any situation without a qualified teacher present. Sessions run by external agencies will be observed at least once during each cycle to ensure consistent and effective Relationships and Sex Education provision.

Parental Rights to Withdraw Children:-

Under the Education Act 1996 and reinforced under the Children and Social Work Act 2017³³, parents have the right to request the withdrawal their children from the Sex Education aspect of RSE lessons. It is important to note that the Relationships Education and the science-based National Curriculum elements are compulsory and parents cannot withdraw their children from these lessons. Any parent expressing concerns will be invited into school to discuss any issues, topics and resources. Should they still feel the need to exercise a request to remove their child, alternative provision will be made for their child to study in other areas of the Beliefs and Values curriculum during these lessons. Parents will also be advised of their obligations to provide such education at home and supporting resources will be made available.

The school embraces the opportunity to work in partnership with parents and will actively seek the opportunity to support learning at home as well as at school. Parents wishing to discuss any element of the schools Relationships and Sex Education provision or this policy may contact the Head of Beliefs and Values.

This policy document is made available to parents via the website, and a printed copy may be made available on request.

³³ Additional advice given to clarify the legal position is in Paragraphs 36-46 of RERSEHE guidance document July 2018 DfE.

Appendix 1 – Curriculum content and approach to teaching

Arrangements for teaching the course may vary from time to time. In the current academic year the pattern is as follows:-

In **Year 7** RSE is taught in mixed-gender and mixed-ability classes. These lessons by specialist staff from the Beliefs and Values team. Some teaching in year 7 is completed by non-specialists, but these are supported by a linked specialist and for the purposes of RSE lessons the specialist will teach key topics. These lessons will focus on the topics of self-esteem, growing up (including puberty and menstruation³⁴), family, friendships, appropriate relationships, Child Sexual Exploitation and grooming, Female Genital Mutilation, bullying and children's rights.

In **Year 8 and 9** RSE is taught in mixed-gender set by ability, and taught in Beliefs and Values lessons entirely by specialists. It includes the topics of:-
(year 8) Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting) Language use in relation to body and sex, break-ups and ending relationships, managing risk online and offline, religion and homosexuality, human rights and human trafficking. Prejudice and Discrimination are addressed as part of their own unit.
(year 9) Sexually Transmitted Infections, contraception, condom skills, mental health (including impact of relationships, pornography. An additional scheme of work covers medical ethics including fertility, infertility and IVF. The School Nursing Service also provide two lessons on STI's and Contraception

In **Year 10 and 11** RSE is taught in mixed-gender classes set by ability. Teaching is by staff within the Beliefs and Values department with some external specialist support. In year 10 topics include issues such as LGBT+ issues, media distortion, pornography, mental health and wellbeing, mindfulness, condom skills and STI's. In year 11 topics include consent, domestic abuse, FGM and condom skills.

³⁴ Clarification of the content to highlight compliance with legislation.