

St. Mary's College



Relationships and Sex Education Policy 2024/2025

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Statement of intent

At St. Mary's College, we understand the importance of educating pupils about sex, relationships and their health, for them to make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives.

The teaching of RSE and health education can help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in the wider society.

We have an obligation to provide pupils with high-quality, evidence and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the school's RSE and health education curriculum will be organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

Rationale:

'I have come that they might have life and have it to the full' (Jn.10.10)

We are involved in relationships and sex education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic College. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE, RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved too be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

Values and Virtues:

Our programme enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to the God's call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- SENDA Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- College ICT Pupils E-Safety
- PHSE and EPR Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the RSE and health education curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Providing clear information to parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- Ensuring RSE and health education is resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- Maintaining and developing the religious ethos of the school.
- Creating and keeping up-to-date a separate written statement of this policy and ensuring the statement is published on the school's website and provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.

The Principal is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring all staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.
- Ensuring parent are fully informed of this policy.
- Reviewing all requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory elements of the RSE and health education curriculum.
- Discussing withdrawal requests with parents, and the pupil if appropriate, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, including the benefits of receiving the education.
- Ensuring withdrawn pupils receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- Encouraging parents to be involved in consultations regarding the school's RSE and health education curriculum.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Reporting to the governing board on the effectiveness of this policy and the curriculum.

The Vice Principal and PSHE coordinator are responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of RSE and health education.
- Working closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the RSE and health education curriculum compliments, and does not duplicate, the content covered in other curriculum subjects.
- Ensuring the curriculum is age-appropriate and of high quality.
- Reviewing changes to the RSE and health education curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of RSE and health education, providing support to staff where necessary.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression between each year group.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to RSE and health education.
- Leading staff meetings and ensuring all members of staff involved in the curriculum have received the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring the correct standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the Principal.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSE and health education curriculum.
- Promoting knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff.
- Being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a pupil that have arisen through the teaching of RSE and health education.

Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with, and promoting, this policy.
- Delivering RSE and health education in a manner that is sensitive, of high quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of appropriate teaching methods and resources are used to cover the content.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE and health education.
- Liaising with the SENCO to identify and respond to individual needs of pupils with SEND. Liaising with the RSE and health education subject leader on key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring pupil progress in RSE and health education.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of RSE or health education to the RSE and health education subject leader or a member of the SLT.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the DSL.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents have requested to withdraw them from the non-statutory components of RSE, by providing them with alternative education opportunities.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs.
- Advising staff on the use of TAs in order to meet pupils' individual needs.

3. Organisation of the RSE and health education curriculum

For the purpose of this policy:

- "Relationships and sex education" is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and helping them to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- "Health education" is defined as teaching pupils about how they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

The majority of the RSE and health education curriculum will be delivered through PSHE education, with statutory elements taught via the science and RE curriculum. The RSE and health education subject leader will work closely with their colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum complements and does not duplicate the content covered in national curriculum subjects.

The school will ensure that the curriculum remains in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance at all times.

The school will consider the context and views of the wider local community when developing the curriculum to ensure it is reflective of circumstances in the local area. The religious

background of all pupils will also be considered when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

The RSE and health education curriculum will be informed by topical issues in the school and wider community, to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs, e.g. if there was a local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections, our curriculum would be tailored to address this issue.

4. RSE subject overview

RSE will continue to develop pupils' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section.

Families

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- Being a good friend
- 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.
- About the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- About the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.

Pupils will also know 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 recognise this in others' relationships.
- Seek help or advice if needed, including reporting concerns about others.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- About 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 relationships.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- How stereotypes, particularly those based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage, e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour.

- That in school and 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 seek help.
- About the types of behaviour in relationships that can be criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- About the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010, and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and media

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, and that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts.
- About online risks, including that material shared with another person has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which they receive.
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- The impact of viewing harmful content.
- 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.
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties, including jail.
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being safe

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- About 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 – this includes online.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:
- 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.

- That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively and 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 both men and women
- The 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 enjoy intimacy without sex.
- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, their effectiveness and options available.
- The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy, with legally and medically 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) are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex and the importance of 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.

5. RSE programmes of study

The school will determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people and includes the statutory content outlined in [section 4](#) of this policy.

Year 7

Biology

- Human Reproductive Organs; Puberty and the Menstrual Cycle; Gametes (sex cells) and Fertilisation; Stages of Pregnancy; Birth and Labour; Fertility Problems (basic).

RSE

Who Am I?

- Humans are created by God as one whole person, both body and soul and should celebrate their uniqueness, value and dignity, which derive from God. Subsequently they should respect themselves and others as persons.

Where We Come From

- A consideration of sexual intercourse within a scientific, moral and religious context. Human reproduction, fertility and the menstrual cycle.

Family and Friends

- The features of positive and stable relationships between family and friends. Different family structures, how to deal with conflict, the qualities of true friendship.

My Life on Screen

- Rooted in the RE teaching that we are made out of love for love, the consideration of the use of digital luse and the effect our use of digital technology can have on ourselves and others.

Extra EPR session Sexual Harassment – delivered by PSHEe Lead and DSL.

What constitutes sexual harassment and what forms it can take, what the law states about sexual harassment, why it is hard to talk about and what to do is they or someone they know is sexually harassed.

Year 8

Created and Chosen

- A consideration of how our deepest identity is in God: as people created, chosen and loved by Him. How science proves our uniqueness and how a growing appreciation of our intended uniqueness can promote self-esteem and well-being.

Appreciating Differences

- Building on the teaching that our deepest identity is in God, a consideration of male/female differences, including issues such as gender stereotypes, gender dysphoria and transgenderism. Equality is championed as being of great importance, whilst simultaneously crucial is celebrating difference. That bullying and exclusion is always wrong, because every person is a child of God, worthy of love.

Feelings

- God's wonderful gift of sexual attraction, which requires self-control, mutual respect and patience to manage well. That our deepest drive to love and be loved is met through sexual union which is total, faithful and open to the precious gift of life.

Before I Was Born

- The miraculous journey from conception to birth. The ending of pregnancies prematurely through miscarriage or deliberately via abortion, and different attitudes surrounding this, including discussions about when life begins.

Think Before You Share

- The social, personal and legal consequences of sharing images of a sexual nature. A consideration of what a digital footprint is, pornography and online exploitation. How

sharing anything in word, speech or action that reduces people to objects dishonours their God-given dignity.

Family

- Exploring what constitutes a family, how families can be different, the law as regards marriage, cohabitation, civil partnerships. Fertility, miscarriage and parenting are also discussed.

Year 9

Knowing My Rights and Responsibilities

- Issues around physical consent and sexual exploitation. Wider human rights and responsibilities, and the tensions between human rights law and cultural/religious expectations.

Extra EPR sessions:

Love People, Use Things

- Issues regarding sexual desire, casual sex, pornography. The importance of loving people and using things, rather than the other way around.

In Control of My Choices

- The difference between love and lust and the importance and benefits of delaying sexual intimacy. A consideration of how we are influenced to make choices.

Fertility and Contraception

- An understanding of various forms of contraception. The Church's teaching on contraception and the value of life, and the specifics of how different contraceptives function.

One Hundred Percent

- Non-physical and online consent. They will learn that consent given under pressure or coercion is not true consent.

Year 10

Biology

- Sexually Transmitted Infections – Limited to Gonorrhoea and HIV (but others discussed). Symptoms and Disease Progression; Prevention (including barrier contraception) and Treatments (including antiretroviral drugs, antibiotics)

RSE

- **Coercive Control**
What it is, what the law states regarding it, how to withstand it.
- **Babies:**
Pregnancy, contraception, abortion, the value and significance of sex
- **Consent and Sexual Harassment**
What it is, what the law states regarding it, how to withstand it.

Year 11

Biology

- Sexual Reproduction (Linked to Genetics and Variation); Contraception – Including barrier and hormonal methods; Menstrual Cycle; Sex Hormones; Infertility Drugs/Treatments; IVF Methods

RSE

- Effects and impacts of the use of pornography, exploitation, objectification, love, sex and intimacy.

6. Health education subject overview

The physical health and mental wellbeing curriculum will continue to develop pupils' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section.

Mental wellbeing

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- That happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- About common types of mental ill health, e.g. anxiety and depression.
- How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- About the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

Internet safety and harms

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- About the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online, over-reliance on online relationships, the risks related to online gambling, how information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
- How to identify harmful behaviours online, including bullying, abuse or harassment, and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

Physical health and fitness

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know about:

- The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health.
- About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation

Healthy eating

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know about:

- The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use and serious mental health conditions.
- The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
- The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- The dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco, the benefits of quitting and how to access the support to do so.

Health and prevention

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know about:

- Personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- Dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- The benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

Basic first aid

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- Basic treatments for common injuries.
- Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- About the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

Changing adolescent body

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- About the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

7. Health education programmes of study

The school will determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people and includes the statutory content outlined in [section 6](#) of this policy.

Year 7

Biology

- Organ Donation (basic introduction/ethics/benefits)

RSE

Who am I?

- Humans are created by God as one valuable person, both body and soul.

Changing bodies

- The emotional and physical changes through puberty. How to look after and accept the changing body, taking responsibility for personal hygiene.

Healthy Inside & Out

- Developing food self-esteem and healthy body image.

Living responsibly

- Social responsibility and respect for self and others. Playing a positive part in the community.

Mental health

- What anxiety is and how to manage it in terms of making healthy choices and responding to social media.

Vaping

- The reasons why people vape and the dangers that accompany it.

Bullying

- What bullying is and body shaming is, why bullies bully, what the law says about bullying, how to discourage a bully, what to do if you or someone else is bullied.

Facts of Life

- What positive relationships look like, how social media can help and hinder this, bullying, aspiration, seeing our innate value through the eyes of God.

Year 8

Biology

Food Groups and Healthy Diet; Health Risks of Smoking

RSE:

Being healthy - Sleep

- The importance of sleep and a good sleeping pattern. Causes of sleep disruption and actions that can be taken to support sleep.

Being healthy – diet and exercise choices

- What 'healthy' means, what influences choices about diet and exercise, which of these influences are most reliable and how to manage less reliable influences.

Being healthy – Maintaining a healthy lifestyle

- The choices people make about diet and exercise, barriers to healthy choices, strategies to manage barriers and an evaluation of our individual health choices.

Tough Relationships

- What prejudice and discrimination are, both historical and current what 'Protected Characteristics' are and how to resist judgement. The challenge to choose the route of tolerance, kindness and forgiveness, and never to suffer in silence.

Wider World

- Exploring issues of prejudice, discrimination and homophobic bullying, including a Holocaust case study, pupils learn that we are called to love and respect one another as children of God with value and dignity that far surpasses our culture, race, religion, sexual orientation, choices and attitudes.

Peer pressure (The Trouble with Max)

- Combatting negative pressures and influences, building a sense of identity and rejecting unhelpful influences.

Year 9

Biology

- Introduction to Stem Cells including Embryonic Sources, Ethics Debate, Potential for Disease Treatments/Cures; Food Groups and Healthy Diet.

RSE

Communication

- How communication is changing, whether social media and communication is addictive and can manipulate thinking. How time, timing and respect are all essential to good communication.

Extremism

- Valuing diversity and recognizing community. Immigration, hate-speech, understanding and preventing extremism and radicalization, keeping our community safe.

Knowing My Rights and Responsibilities

- Physical consent and sexual exploitation. Wider human rights and responsibilities, and the tensions between human rights law and cultural/religious expectations.

Alcohol

- The reasons why teenagers might drink, the physical, mental and relational risks of underage drinking. Strategies to resist the pressure to drink underage.

Equality & Tolerance

- Do equality and tolerance have limits? Is there a better option than just tolerance? Valuing a person while embracing difference, the importance and limits of free speech.

Year 10

Biology

- Health Risks of Smoking and Excessive Alcohol Consumption; 'Lifestyle' Diseases including Type II Diabetes, Some Cancers, Heart Disease; Risk Factors for Non-communicable Disease including Obesity, Inactivity, Diet, Smoking etc; Cancer Symptoms and Screening; Pathogens and infectious disease including transmission, treatment and prevention; Vaccination and Herd Immunity; Prescription Drugs – testing stages, toxicity, dangers of overdose (focus on paracetamol); The physical health benefits of exercise.

RSE

- Pregnancy, Abortion, the significance and value of sex
- STIS
- Consent and Sexual Harassment

Year 11

Biology

- Type II Diabetes – risk factors, prevention, treatments; Stem Cell Research; Hormones; Puberty; Sex Hormones; Menstrual Cycle

RSE

- The impacts and effects of the use of pornography
- Exploitation, objectification and intimacy

8. Delivery of the curriculum

Through effective organisation and delivery of the RSE and health education, we will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

RSE and health education complement several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.

The RSE and health education curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

The curriculum will proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupil's physical, emotional and sexual development. RSE and health education will be delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.

Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly in the Equality Act 2010, so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.

The school will integrate LGBTQ+ content into the RSE curriculum – this content will be taught as part of the overall curriculum, rather than a standalone topic or lesson. LGBTQ+ content will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate and factual way that allows pupils to explore gender identity and the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships.

The curriculum will be designed to focus on pupils of all gender identities and expressions and activities will be planned to ensure all are actively involved.

The school will ensure it delivers teaching on sensitive topics, e.g. the body, in a way that is appropriate and sensitive to the various needs of the school community, e.g. cultural background.

All teaching and resources will be assessed by the RSE and health education subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any SEND, if applicable. Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning. Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of pupils. Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the school's Online Safety Policy, and Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement.

Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programmes accordingly. Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and honestly.

Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of healthy relationships, including marriage, when teaching RSE, though sensitivity will always be given as to not stigmatise pupils on the basis of their home circumstances. In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.

Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.

At all points of delivery of the curriculum, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how, will be planned in conjunction with parents.

9. Curriculum links

The school will seek opportunities to draw links between RSE and health education and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning. RSE and health education will be linked to the following subjects:

- **Citizenship through PSHE**– pupils are provided with the knowledge, skills and understanding to help prepare them to play a full and active part in society, including

an understanding of how laws are made and upheld and how to make sensible decisions.

- **Science** – pupils are taught about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows, including puberty.
- **ICT and computing** – pupils are taught about how they can keep themselves safe online and the different risks that they may face online as they get older.
- **PE** – pupils can develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and lead healthy, active lives.
- **PSHE** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.

10. Working with parents

The school understands that parents' role in the development of their children's understanding about relationships and health is vital; therefore, we will work closely with parents when planning and delivering the content of the school's RSE and health education curriculum.

When in consultation with parents, the school will provide:

- The curriculum content, including what will be taught and when.
- Examples of the resources the school intends to use to deliver the curriculum.
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE and health education.

Parents will be provided with frequent opportunities to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to RSE and health education. Parents will be regularly consulted on the curriculum content, through meetings and letters, and the curriculum will be planned in conjunction with parents' views.

The school will remain aware that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents. If parents have concerns regarding RSE and health education, they will **contact the school office** to arrange a meeting with the PSHE coordinator in the first instance.

11. Working with external agencies

Working with external agencies will be used to enhance our delivery of RSE and health education and bring in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the RSE and health education curriculum but will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

When working with external agencies, the school will:

- Check the visitor credentials of all external agencies.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the external experts fits with the planned curriculum and provisions of this policy.
- Discuss with the visitor the details of how they intend to deliver their sessions and ensure the content is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils.

- Request copies of the materials and lesson plans the visitor will use, to ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs.
- Agree with the agency on how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports must be dealt with in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will use visitors to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of teaching staff, not to replace teaching by those staff.

12. Withdrawal from lessons

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting such a request, the Principal would discuss the reasoning with the parents, and, as appropriate with the child, to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum as well as any potential detrimental effects (such as the pupil hearing a peer's version of what was taught over an accurate one), though such concerns may be mitigated if the parents proposed to deliver sex education to their child at home instead. The right to withdraw exists up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education; the practicalities of our provision would need to be discussed with the parents as our ethos for any sex education is that it is done within the context of Relationship Education.

13. Equality and accessibility

The school will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against pupils because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

The school will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of its pupils and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with the above protected characteristics.

The school will be aware that pupils with SEND are entitled to learn about RSE and health education, and the curriculum will be designed to be inclusive of all pupils. The school will be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND – teachers will understand that they may need to liaise with the SENCO and be more explicit and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to pupils with SEND.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of pupils at different developmental stages, the school will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

The school will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between all pupils, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic.

The school will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and managed promptly. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the school's Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy.

14. Safeguarding and confidentiality

All pupils will be taught about keeping themselves safe, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

To meet DfE's best practice advice, the DSL will be involved in the formulation of safeguarding-related areas of the curriculum, as the knowledge and resources may help to address safeguarding issues more appropriately and effectively.

When teaching issues that are particularly sensitive for pupils of all ages, e.g. self-harm or suicide, teachers will be made aware of the risks of inadvertently encouraging, or providing instructions to, pupils. Teaching of these subjects will always prioritise preventing harm to pupils as a central goal.

Confidentiality within the classroom will be an important component of RSE and health education, and teachers will be expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible, in compliance with the school's Pupil Confidentiality Policy.

Teachers will, however, understand that some aspects of RSE may lead to a pupil raising a safeguarding concern, e.g. disclosing that they are being abused, and that if a disclosure is made, the DSL will be alerted immediately. Pupils will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report, and how their report will be handled – this includes the process for when they have a concern about a peer.

15. Staff training

Training will be provided by the RSE and health education subject leader to the relevant members of staff on a termly basis to ensure they are up-to-date with the RSE and health education curriculum. Training will also be scheduled around any updated guidance on the curriculum and any new developments, e.g. changes to the law as regards sexual harassment or the minimum age to marry, which may need to be addressed in relation to the curriculum.

16. Monitoring and review

The Vice Principal and PSHE coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subject. They will conduct subject assessments on a termly basis, which will include a mixture of the following:

- Self-evaluations
- Lesson observations
- Topic feedback forms
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Lesson planning scrutiny

This policy will be reviewed by the Vice Principal in conjunction with the PSHE + EPR coordinator, Head of Biology and Head of RE on an annual basis.

Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programmes, will be implemented by the Principal. Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff and, where necessary, parents and pupils, involved in the RSE and health education curriculum.