RSE POLICY

*Aims*

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

* Establish a supportive environment for open dialogue on sensitive topics.
* Equip students with knowledge and understanding of puberty, sexual development, and the significance of health and hygiene.
* Foster the growth of self-respect, confidence, and empathy among students.
* Cultivate a positive atmosphere regarding sexuality and relationships.
* Provide students with appropriate terminology to express themselves and describe their bodies accurately.

*Statutory requirements*

As an Independent Secondary School we must provide RSE to all pupils as per the Children and Social work act 2017. In teaching RSE, we must have regard to the guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

*Policy development*

This policy has been developed in light of the new guidance on RSE issued by the Department for Education

*Definition*

RSE encompasses the emotional, social, and cultural growth of students, incorporating education on relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy living, diversity, and personal identity. It involves both imparting information and delving into issues and values. RSE aims to provide knowledge and understanding without advocating for sexual activity promotion.

*Curriculum & Delivery*

RSE is not confined to a standalone subject; it is interwoven throughout the entire school curriculum, influencing the school's ethos, pastoral care system, and guided by teacher role modelling. It encourages seizing opportunities to address students' questions and explore relevant issues as they emerge. RSE forms an integral part of the personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) education curriculum.

While biological aspects are covered in the science curriculum, other facets find their place in Religious Studies (RS).The school recognises the need to begin with pupils’ own experiences, beliefs and values and, therefore, places a high importance on creating a supportive and secure atmosphere where they can develop the confidence needed to talk, listen and think about sex and relationships.

In order to do this, teachers:

* Establish clear ground rules with students, emphasising mutual respect and discouraging open personal disclosures in a classroom setting.
* Employ distancing techniques when discussing sensitive topics.
* Encourage students to engage in reflection on the topics discussed.
* Utilise a variety of teaching methods to facilitate exploration of attitudes, values, and beliefs, including active learning techniques that involve students and allow them to personalize information. This approach increases the relevance and effectiveness of learning.
* Incorporate activities that enable students to practice and enhance their communication, negotiation, and decision-making skills.
* Consult with students regarding the issues they wish to explore, their preferred methods of collaboration, the effectiveness of lessons, and any necessary adjustments.

The school recognises that some aspects of RSE are a whole school concern and that some aspects can be covered by subject teachers across the curriculum. However, there are aspects which need to be taught separately in PSHE, including those specifically relating to sexual matters such as contraception, STIs and LGBT.

Select resources from agencies that represent diverse beliefs and are suitable for students' age, maturity, and religious and cultural backgrounds.

Provide all teachers with training on addressing controversial topics and ensure they understand confidentiality boundaries. They should also know where to refer students for confidential advice and support when needed.

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

*Roles and responsibilities*

* The headteacher:

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE

* Staff: Staff are responsible for:

Delivering RSE in a sensitive way

Modelling positive attitudes to RSE

Monitoring progress

Responding to the needs of individual pupils

Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

* Pupils: Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.
* Parents’ right to withdraw Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive RSE rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.
* Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil’s educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

*Training*

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction to teaching RSE through PSHE and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.