



Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Governing Body Committee: Student Welfare & Behaviour (SW&B)

Date approved: SW&B July 23 FGB (draft under review Sept 23)

Next review: July 24

Definition

What is Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE provides opportunities to explore the spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural development of our students, whilst also supporting their overall mental and physical wellbeing. We recognise the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life and the requirement for students to have the knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy.

RSE involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. This is achieved through a combination of sharing information, exploring issues and values and engaging in informed conversations. High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching supports our students in preparing for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Students will be able to put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. RSE supports our students to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

At Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

PRINCIPLES

Background and Legislation

From September 2020 the Department for Education introduced compulsory Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education for secondary schools in England.

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.

Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form (TGS) has chosen to follow the National Curriculum regarding the teaching of PSHCE as a discrete subject, as well as part of the Pastoral Curriculum and other relevant subjects such as Science and Religious Education. At TGS we believe in helping all students reach their full potential, both socially and academically and prepare students for adult life.

Aims

The aim of RSE is to give our students the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. TGS acknowledge that an important aspect of our educational purpose is to educate the whole person. Relationship and Sex Education forms an important part of a young person's sense of identity and interaction with the outside world. We therefore believe that good quality Relationship and Sex education should be made available to all. It will always be taught in such a way as to make it meaningful, relevant and accessible, and at the same time recognising that we have students from diverse cultures and beliefs.

The staff and governors recognise the diversity of family units which exist and this issue will be treated with sensitivity. The academy approach will also take into account the students' different levels of maturity.

The aims of RSE at our academy are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

Roles and responsibilities

Governing Board

The governing board has delegated the approval of this policy to the SW&B committee.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the academy, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 7).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE

RSE is currently delivered by form tutors, and specialist outside visitors. In addition, guidance may be given in other subject areas, by the HOY, tutors, the academy's mental health team and as part of well-being weeks. The academy also works with relevant outside agencies to support with delivery of specialist areas of the RSE curriculum.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the PSHCE Lead, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.

Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review - Subject Leader for PSHCE and the Deputy Headteacher collated all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance;
- Staff consultation - school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations;
- Parent/carer/stakeholder consultation - parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to comment on the suggested policy;
- Student consultation - we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE;
- Ratification - once amendments were made, the policy was shared with Governors and ratified.

PRACTICE

Delivering RSE

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

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

RSE is primarily taught within the personal, social, health, citizenship and economic (PSHCE) education curriculum. However some aspects of RSE may be taught or addressed across other subjects including but not limited to:

- Science
- RS
- Drama
- English
- Child Development
- Tutorial programme
- Social Science
- Media Studies
- Health & Social Care
- Assemblies
- Whole School Curriculum Days (WSCD)

In addition, a wide range of visiting specialists will deliver/support the programme, enriching the students' knowledge and understanding.

In line with recognised good practice for RSE our programme will address the three areas:

Skills

If RSE is going to be effective it needs to include opportunities for young people to develop skills, as it can be hard for them to act on the basis of only having information. The kind of skills young people develop as part of RSE are linked to more general life-skills and will be common to other areas of the curriculum such as: Science, RS, English, Drama as well as the Pastoral Programme. For example, being able to communicate, listen, negotiate, ask for and identify sources of help and advice, are useful life-skills and can be applied in terms of sexual relationships.

Effective RSE develops young people's skills in:

- Negotiation
- Making choices based on probable outcomes
- Assertion
- Listening
- Recognising pressures from other people and to how to resist them
- Dealing with and challenging prejudice
- Seeking help from adults - including parents, carers and professionals - through the family, community and health and welfare services
- Differentiating between accurate and inaccurate information
- Discussing a range of moral and social issues and perspectives on sex and sexuality, including different cultural attitudes and sensitive issues like sexuality, gender, abortion and contraception

Attitudes and beliefs

Young people can be exposed to a wide range of attitudes and beliefs in relation to relationships, sex and sexuality. These sometimes appear contradictory and confusing. Young people are generally interested in the moral and cultural frameworks that bind sex and sexuality. They often welcome opportunities to talk about issues where people have strong beliefs. At TGS we are always aware that talking in a balanced way about differences in opinion does not promote one set of views over another, or mean that one agrees with a particular view. Part of exploring and understanding cultural, religious and moral views is finding out that you can agree to disagree.

Effective sex education also provides young people with an opportunity to explore the reasons why people have the relationships they do, why people have sex, and to think about how it involves emotions, respect for one self and other people and their feelings, decisions and bodies. Students have the chance to explore gender differences and how ethnicity and sexuality can influence people's feelings and options. They are encouraged to decide for themselves what the qualities of positive relationships are. It is important that they understand how bullying, stereotyping, abuse, the use of social media and exploitation can negatively influence relationships.

Knowledge and Understanding

Young people get information about relationships, sex and sexuality, gender issues, prejudice and stereotyping from a wide range of sources including each other, through the media including advertising, television and magazines, as well as leaflets, books and websites which are intended to be sources of information*. Providing information through RSE is therefore about finding out what young people already know, challenging misconceptions and adding to their existing knowledge.

Students will need to have information about:

- The physical and emotional effects of relationships and sexual behaviour
- Types of relationships
- Love and commitment
- Keeping safe
- Marriage and partnership

- The law relating to sexual behaviour and relationships
- Stereotyping
- The range of religious and cultural views on sex, sexuality and sexual diversity

In addition, young people should be provided with information about the range of sources of advice and support that is available in the community and nationally.

Values Framework

Relationship and Sex Education is always taught with due regard to moral and legal considerations and with the explicit values of family life and supportive relationships. It is taught by members of staff or external providers who are confident and experienced in this aspect of education.

(* training is delivered through INSET and cascading of information. There may be opportunities for external training)

Among the values promoted are:

- Respect for oneself and other people
- Taking responsibility for one's actions in all situations
- Honesty and loyalty in relationships
- The importance and responsibilities of the 'family unit' for all members
- Sensitivity towards the needs and views of others
- To recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks of certain types of behaviour
- To recognise and accept the differences of others

Key themes will be introduced in different year groups pertinent to the emotional and physical maturity of age groups and will be revisited at various points for further more in depth study. Please see Appendix 1 of this policy to find the statutory requirements of what students should know by the end of secondary school.

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

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction 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.

Parents/carers' right to withdraw

Parents/carers' 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 sex education rather than being withdrawn, the academy will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found with this policy on our school website and addressed to the Headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education. Please note that the right to withdraw only applies to the sex education programme and all students will be required to attend lessons on relationships education.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHE Coordinator and the Senior Leadership line manager through:

- Lesson observations
- Staff feedback
- Student panels
- Student workbooks

The Head of Years' (HOYs) continually review the Year 7 -13 Tutorial Programme and work with other Senior Leadership Team (SLT) colleagues on updating the RSE policy on a regular basis, ensuring that it reflects current guidance and legislation.

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