



# Religious Education and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

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#### **1. Statement of intent**

At St Edward's, through engagement with the RSHE curriculum, we intend that pupils will be equipped with the significant knowledge and practical skills to navigate their lives safely, respectfully and with tolerance towards others. In addition, the knowledge taught should enable pupils to make informed choices and decisions regarding their well-being, health and relationships. All pupils need to be able to implement the knowledge and skills to evaluate and make decisions when presented with challenges and risks. Throughout the pupil's journey at St Edward's, we strive to help pupils build their resilience and identify where, and from whom they can seek help.

St Edward's encourages each pupil's physical, intellectual, spiritual and personal development within a Catholic setting to ensure that each pupil:

- Fulfils their God given potential
- Communicates effectively
- Makes good academic progress
- Develops self- esteem and confidence
- Is prepared for the next stage of their educational journey.

## **The Definition of Relationships Education**

RSHE can be divided into key strands as outlined below,

- Relationships
- Families and people who care for me
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

## **Relationships and Sex Education**

Relationship and Sex Education at St Edward's School aims to give our pupils the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships. First, the curriculum covers healthy and unhealthy relationships and what makes a good friend, colleague and successful marriage or committed relationship. Then, at the appropriate time, focussing on learning about developing intimate relationships, equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make safe, informed and healthy choices about their sexual health and well-being as they progress through adult life. St Edward's identifies that many interactions and relationships have moved online in recent years, and the curriculum has adapted to reflect this movement. For example, lessons were added to the year 10 curriculum that focused on the treatment of, and violence towards, women with specific reference to the case of Sarah Everade.

Key principles that underpin the curriculum that our pupils are taught

- To respect the dignity and worth of every person who is made in the in the image and likeness of God.
- That we are called to love everyone and everyone deserves to be loved.
- To form healthy relationships and live in communities with one another.

## **Health Education**

Health Education aims to provide pupils with the knowledge and skills required to maintain good physical, sexual, and mental health and overall wellbeing by making 'good' choices and decisions about their lifestyles and habits. They learn to identify external factors that can harm their wellbeing whilst thinking about coping strategies to safeguard against the issues of external factors. These include social media influences, peer pressures, drugs and consumption of alcohol, and balanced diet and pupils must be made aware of both long-term and short-term impacts on their health. Lessons are designed to provide signposting that enables pupils to seek support as early as possible should they become concerned about any element of their health.

We do not judge but accept that everyone is loved by God. St Edward's must be ready to walk with them on the journey to adulthood enabling them to become capable of creating and enjoying healthy relationships.

### **A unique lack of prior learning and our immediate responses**

We recognise, in our role as Educators within the SEMH environment that many, if not all, our pupils arrive at St Edward's in a position of disadvantage. They may not necessarily have ever been exposed to formative experiences in their early years that would amount to healthy moral, spiritual or health related influences. It may thus prove necessary to bring our pupils into contact with key, formative influences from the outset.

Holistically our delivery of RE, RSHE, Thought for the Day (TFTD), pastoral care and tailored therapeutic sessions include:

1. A sense of their own personal uniqueness and worth as a human being.
2. A basic understanding of Jesus' key teachings on relationships
3. A recognition that there is a clear link between faith and behaviour/ attitudes towards others
4. A respect towards women
5. An awareness of the need to value themselves and others.
6. An understanding of human diversity: that we all differ from one another and, in some ways are similar
7. An understanding and appreciation of the meaning and role of the family
8. Awareness of different types of relationship
9. An understanding of rights and responsibilities
10. Awareness of basic personal hygiene
11. Basic knowledge and understanding of human anatomy
12. Knowledge of how to stay safe
13. Awareness of power of peer and media influences, potential problems and how to deal with them
14. Development of the appropriate language with which to express your opinions.
15. Willingness and ability to ask questions.

**By the end of Primary Education key stages, pupils at St Edward's School, through engagement in the RSHE programme, will have been taught the following:**

#### **Families and people who care for me**

- That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- The characteristics of healthy family life; commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty; protection and care for children and other family members; the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
- That others' families, either in school or on the broader world, sometimes look different from their family, but they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
- That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other, intended to be lifelong.

- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
- Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite-sex and same-sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same-sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

### **Caring friendships**

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
- The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- Healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship makes them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, manage conflict, manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

### **Respectful relationships**

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or background), or making different choices or having different preferences or beliefs.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- The conventions of courtesy and manners
- The importance of self-respect and how this links to their happiness
- 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 those in positions of authority
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
- What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

### **Online relationships**

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online, including when we are anonymous

- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
- How information and data is shared and used online

### **Being safe**

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- About the concept of privacy and its implications of it for both children and adults, including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard,
- How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so where to get advice, for example, family, school or other sources.

### **By the end of the Secondary key stages, pupils at St Edward's School, through engagement in the RSHE programme, will have been taught the following:**

#### **Families**

- That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- How these relationships contribute to human happiness and their importance for raising children.
- What marriage is, including their legal status – for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for instance, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- Why marriage is an important choice for many couples and must be freely entered into.
- The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- 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), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

#### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts, including online, such as: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict.

- Reconciliation and ending relationships include 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, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- 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, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence, and why are these always unacceptable.
- The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly regarding the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

### **Online and media**

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- 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.
- Not to give material to others they would not want to share further and not to share personal material sent to them.
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- The impact of viewing harmful content, specifically sexually explicit material, for example, pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours. It can damage how people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- Sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties, including jail.
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

### **Being safe**

- 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 in all contexts, including online
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

- 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 or negatively, for example, 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 men and women and menopause.
- That there are a 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 to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- the facts around pregnancy, including miscarriage.
- 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).
- How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and 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.

## **2. Legal requirements**

St Edward's School's RSHE programme meets the legal requirements outlined within the following:

- Duty to promote wellbeing [Children's Act 2004].
- Duty to prepare children for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life [Education Act 2006].
- Ensure pupils learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up of children [Learning Skills Act 2006].
- Protect pupils from unsuitable teaching and materials [Learning and Skills Act 2006]
- Teach Statutory RSHE elements in the national science curriculum.
- Meet the school safeguarding obligations.
- Make the policy available to pupils and parents [Education Act 2011].
- Right of parental withdrawal from all parts of our RSHE, except those parts included in the national curriculum [Education Act 2011].
- Improve support for looked after children as per the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Prevent discrimination, advanced equality and opportunity and foster good relations between different groups [Equality Act 2010].

We are following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales, and as advocated by the DFE. The RE and RSHE frameworks are concerned with nurturing human wholeness and are integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of our pupils. They are centred on Christ's vision of being a human as good news and will be positive and prudent showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

### **3. Process of developing the policy**

This policy has been developed in line with the relationships education, relationships and sex education [RSE] and health Education statutory guidance.

The RSHE Lead has consulted with the PSHE association and other schools. With the knowledge gained from this process, the existing RSE policy was reviewed to produce a draft policy to be shared with those responsible for delivering RSHE lessons to attain their thoughts and contributions.

Once the school SLT and governors have finalised the procedure, it will be placed on the school website, and parents will be consulted for their opinions and ideas. After the consultation with parents and all comments and ideas have been recorded, the policy may be adapted accordingly.

The policy is reviewed annually, and the above process is carried out during each review period. The following review date will be May 2024.

### **4. Aims and objectives of our relationship, sex and health education program (RSHE)**

Our curriculum reflects Catholic values and highlights the importance of stable relationships, such as marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues, which are essential in responding to God's call to love others along with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body.

Our RSHE programme aims to ensure that our pupils are given information that will enable them to make informed, safe, and responsible choices in life.

There are three main elements;

#### **Attitudes and Values:**

- ✓ Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- ✓ Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- ✓ Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- ✓ Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- ✓ Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

#### **Personal and Social Skills:**

- ✓ Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.



- ✓ Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- ✓ Learning to make choices based on an understanding of differences and with the absence of prejudice.
- ✓ Developing an appreciation of choices made.
- ✓ Managing conflict.
- ✓ Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

- ✓ Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- ✓ Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- ✓ Learning about contraception

### **5. Equal opportunities**

As a school, we have responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010. Accordingly, we will ensure that St Edward's School strives to do its best for all pupils, irrespective of disability, educational need, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

#### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+)**

As part of the RSHE programme at St Edward's School teaching connected to the LGBT+ community is integrated throughout the curriculum at the point the school considers appropriate for the pupil's development stage.

At St Edward's RSHE and RE are sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils with respect to their different abilities, levels of maturity, lived experiences and personal circumstances. We leave no-one behind. Faith and culture are taught about in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination.

### **6. Key roles and responsibilities**

- The Board of Governors at St Edward's is responsible for the implication of the school's RSHE policy. The St Edward's School governor directly designated to oversee the subject of RSHE is Sharon Murphy.
- The Headmaster is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the RSHE policy.
- RSHE Lead is responsible for keeping up-to-date with changes in government/ external regulations guidance relating to RSE, consulting with staff who directly teach the subject and consulting with external professional agencies to ensure they devise a comprehensive RSHE curriculum of study to deliver to pupils.

- RSHE lead will work closely and collaboratively with the DSL to ensure that keeping children safe is at the heart of the RSHE curriculum and that a preventative curriculum is devised.
- All staff at St Edward's are responsible for role-modelling positive relationships whilst promoting the school's fundamental principles;
  - Faith
  - Respect
  - Honesty
  - Generosity
  - Tolerance
  - Responsibility
  - Justice

## **7. Confidentiality and safeguarding**

The RSHE lead has achieved the Advance RSHE lead training certificate delivered through The National College training programme while updating training through external courses with the PSHE association.

Staff responsible for providing timetabled RSHE lessons have undergone subject-specific training to teach sensitive topics outlined in the RSHE curriculum; this is supported through this school's online training platform at the National College as well as from external agencies. In addition, all staff at St Edward's receive statutory training concerning Keeping Children Safe in Education. Training allows for a consistent approach across the teaching of the subject and ensures secure subject knowledge.

### **Disclosure:**

Due to the nature of RSHE education, pupils' learning may result in them seeking advice or support on a specific personal issue. Although teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality, it is essential for everyone's safety that teachers and pupils are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential.

### **Peer-on-peer / Harmful Sexual Behaviour:**

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. All Schools should be aware of and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns, including those outside and online.

Please refer to the school safeguarding policy for further detailing of procedures surrounding disclosures and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#).

## **8. Programme of study**

The RSE is delivered through the RSHE curriculum.

Please find the RSHE Curriculum map [here](#), which outlines at which key stage topics are taught.

RSHE is embedded throughout the school and not only delivered during timetabled lessons. Therefore, it is in line with the school's ethos.

Pupils at St Edward's School start each day with the attendance of "Thought for the Day" (TFTD), which is the opportunity for the whole school community to gather, focus and reflect upon inspirational and moral messages linked to the school's Catholic ethos, setting the tone of the school day. Staff members from across all departments take turns delivering these assemblies helping to create community, unity and reinforcing the aims of the RSHE curriculum.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to education of the whole person. Teaching about relationships and sexuality at St Edward's is reflected in each relevant part of the curriculum. Whilst, for example, some aspects of RSHE will be explored further in the context of science and RE lessons, each is informed by the other. Each discipline speaks with consistency about the meaning of human love and the virtues that are enshrined in the Church's teaching.

Science features the 'mechanical' and physical process and development of human reproduction including structure and function of the reproductive systems and can be found in the Scheme of Work.

To ensure coverage of all the statutory RSHE topics, St Edward's School RSHE curriculum closely tracks the recommended topics in the PSHE scheme of work provided by the PSHE Association. However, we have made some adaptations for our pupils' needs regarding resources and less content. In addition, our curriculum allows teachers to be flexible, address RSHE-related issues relevant to our pupils, and highlight, for example, via national press and social media.

Several whole-school RSHE days are held throughout the school year, where sessions are delivered by an outside speaker or organisation, further enriching the school's curriculum.

At St Edward's School, we support the importance of a pupil's voice. Therefore, pupils must be able to ask any questions they wish freely. However, consideration should be given to how to respond to questions. If necessary, teachers should feel able to ask a pupil to wait for an answer to give them time to consult with the school's leadership team if they think this appropriate or if the question raises potential safeguarding concerns. In addition, the teacher should be able to work with colleagues if necessary to construct appropriate answers.

### **The Law:**

At St Edward's School, it is recognised that pupils must know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people. Through RSHE lessons, pupils are made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including, for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours, including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography

- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

## **9. Assessment**

St Edward's School gauges pupils' knowledge and the impact of RSHE through summative assessment. The process is completed half-termly with assistance from the school's progression measuring tool.

The assessment process is more informal than that of most subjects. It consists of a summative assessment and a holistic baselining and evaluation of pupils' knowledge at the start of the topic before gathering the knowledge gained at the end of the teaching process. With evidence to justify teachers' judgements based on the following:

- Pupils' work
- Pupils' contributions to class and group discussion
- Pupils' attendance
- Records of Pupils' Engagement with RSHE

This type of assessment reduces the barriers to formal evaluation. In addition, it encourages pupils to freely express their prior knowledge and what they have learned rather than asking them specific exam-style questions.

Each pupil's progress through the RSHE curriculum is regularly checked to ensure consistent learning. In addition, pupils are routinely asked for their opinions on how well they feel their knowledge has progressed in RSHE and what could be done to improve their enjoyment and understanding of specific topics.

## **10. Rights to withdraw**

As of September 2020, the relationships education, relationships and sex education and Health Education [England] regulations clarify that pupils receiving Secondary Education must be taught RSHE [relationships, sex and Health Education. Under DFE guidance, parents will continue to have the right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of our RSHE in

secondary schools. However, there is no right to withdraw from elements of sex education covered in the national curriculum, e.g. in science.

Parents that wish to withdraw their child from sex education taught through RSHE can do so via the consent form that is annually distributed to parents.

This review: GM/AB/AS/SW/SB October 2023

Approved by the Board: October 2023