

Maiden Erlegh Trust

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY (SECONDARY)



MAIDEN ERLEGH
TRUST

Including local arrangements in annexes for:

OAK TREE SCHOOL

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Rationale

Maiden Erlegh Trust schools are inclusive schools and so we believe that all members of our community are of equal worth. At Maiden Erlegh Trust schools our aim is that everyone:

- Is respected and respects others
- Takes part in the life of the school
- Achieves to their potential
- Develops skills essential to life
- Can exercise choice

These aims underpin this policy which is also key to promoting students' spiritual moral, social and cultural development.

The importance of sexual relationships in life is such that sex education must play a crucial part in preparing young people for their future lives as adults and parents.

We recognise the important role of family, friends, media, advertising, community support groups and previous educational experiences on the development of people's physical and mental well-being.

This Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy has been drawn up with reference to the Equality Act 2010 and Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers September 2020.

Values

RSE does not attempt to prescribe values and standards on students; the Trust believes that these come primarily from the home, but they recognise that the school will inevitably influence how students determine their values and standards and exercise their responsibilities in life.

At Maiden Erlegh Trust Schools we believe that RSE is about students understanding the importance of stable and committed relationships based on mutual respect and love, including marriage, and the importance of family life.

It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health; but is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

Delivery of RSE

All students have the opportunity to participate in a Relationships and Sex Education programme which is delivered through the National Curriculum (Science), RE and Personal Development lessons in all years (*see curriculum website pages for details*).

Personal Development lessons will help students by preparing them for an adult life in which they can:

- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour
- Be aware of their sexuality, and understand and respect all human sexuality
- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and to respect individual conscience, and the skills to judge what kind of relationships they want
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity
- Understand the consequences of their actions and how to behave responsibly within sexual and other social relationships
- Communicate effectively; have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unintended/unwanted conceptions, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV
- Understand the reasons for having safe sex
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others
- Be aware of the dangers of social media for exploitation and sexting
- Avoid being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex
- Access confidential sexual health advice, support and, if necessary, treatment
- Know how the law applies to sexual relationships

RSE is taught by a team of committed teachers who meet regularly to review the programme and to update resources. The teaching staff concerned with the delivery of sex education empathise with the policy, have a sympathetic approach and the necessary personal skills.

It is the responsibility of teachers to:

- Plan and deliver sex and relationships education according to the school's written policy.
- Give information about appropriate health professionals or clinics to visit.
- Avoid individual advice regarding any aspect of sexual health including contraception.
- Not to guarantee complete, unconditional confidentiality.
- Follow the school's procedures in suspected cases of abuse.

In their delivery of lessons, teachers will be sensitive to students' age, gender, sexual identity, cultural and religious beliefs as well as Special Educational Needs.

The governing body, parents and students are encouraged to play a part in ensuring that RSE addresses the needs of the students and parents, as well as community health priorities. We work closely with health and other professionals to provide training for staff, access to resources and deliver bespoke sessions for students.

Right of withdrawal

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

This is explained to parents in a letter outlining the RSE course for their child's year group.

If parents wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from RSE, they should inform the Headteacher in writing. If a student is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the student receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation of the programme is undertaken by the Senior Leadership Group.

ANNEX 1 – WHAT SCHOOLS MUST COVER (TAKEN FROM THE DFE STATUTORY RSE GUIDANCE)

Families

Students should know:

- 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.
- The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

Students should know:

- 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 relationship.
- 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 (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- That in school and in 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 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 these are always unacceptable.
- The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and media

Students should know:

- 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 provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- 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 (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

Students should know:

- 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

Students should 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 or 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 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/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.

Mental wellbeing

Students should 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.
- 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.
- 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

Students should know:

- The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and 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

Students should know:

- 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, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.
- About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating

Students should 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

Students should know:

- The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to 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.
- Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.

Health and prevention

Students should know:

- About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- (late secondary) 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

Students should know:

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

Changing adolescent body

Students should know:

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

ANNEX 2 – OAK TREE SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Rationale

At Oak Tree School, we believe that effective RSHE education is essential to enable our young people to have healthy relationships, stay safe and make informed decisions about their lives. We believe that RSHE is a core subject whereby students gain knowledge, skills and values that will help them develop their independence. For children with Autism and associated complex needs developing positive relationships is a key challenge. Due to their sensory needs, health education is also a daily concern, therefore the content of the RSE programme is integrated into the PSHE curriculum. Oak Tree School ensure that topics around relationships and health are integral to the wider curriculum and teaching methods in all its forms.

Relationship and Sex Education is the lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development and at Oak Tree School the emphasis includes healthy relationships, rights and responsibilities and staying safe.

Sex education is that part of a student's education which provides knowledge about reproduction and puberty and an understanding of the nature of intimate relationships and sexuality. It is an essential element and forms part of a wider relationships' education that encourages acquisition of skills to make positive and fulfilling relationships, an aspect that can be a challenge for many of our students. It also helps students examine their own, and other people's, attitudes and values to respect and empathise with others. RSHE needs to be placed within a moral, social, legal, cultural, ethical and personal context. RSHE is taught once a week for those of statutory age. A different topic is taught every half term, and where appropriate will be taught in a cross curricular manner.

We aim to develop sex and relationship education in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum that is part of the wider framework of PSHE. Sex and relationship education will be fully integrated into the curriculum and not isolated, taken out of context, or over-emphasised in any way.

We aim to deliver RSE throughout our PSHE curriculum in a way that will help students learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying sexual activity, considering the level of understanding and challenges our students face. Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education makes young people less likely to enter sexual activity and helps to prevent unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

Oak Tree School appreciates the significant importance of RSE as the students continue to grow older. In light of this, from KS3 all students will be taught BTEC Personal Growth and Well Being and will achieve a qualification according to their cognitive understanding (e.g. Entry level 1, level 1 or 2) .

We aim to work in partnership with parents, offering information regularly on the content and delivery of our sex and relationship education. To the best of our ability we will reflect the wishes of parents, the culture of the local community and the views of students and teachers.

We aim to help students recognise the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up children. We also aim to help them understand the importance of other strong and mutually supportive relationships. We will ensure that there is no criticism of any one form of relationship and no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

We also recognise that a range of people from the wider community, such as health professionals, can help to enhance and enrich the delivery of our programme. However, we will ensure that anyone coming into school to help deliver the programme is aware of the school's policy and abides by it.

Legislation and Statutory Documentation

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

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2021'
- 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'
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Teaching Methods

Active learning methods which involve students' full participation are used and PSHE and RSE takes place within normal classroom provision of mixed-sex and mixed ability classes. When appropriate, students may be placed into different groups according to their relevant needs, or into single-sex groups for gender sensitive topics.

Teaching methods will take into account developmental differences of students and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Teachers will plan a variety of activities which will help to engage all learners and cater to their differing needs. We will ensure that the programme is tailored to the individual needs of students and takes into account their physical and emotional maturity. Teachers will ensure that all learners can access a curriculum relevant to their own specific needs.

Staff will help students to develop the confidence to talk, listen and think about health, relationships and sex through a variety of strategies.

Parents' personal views and understanding of their children will always be taken into account in the use of teaching methods and resources, in line with the statutory expectations published by the DfE.

The school staff will liaise closely to ensure that both PSHE and Science programmes complement each other and reinforce learning. We will set all objectives covered as part of the Science curriculum within the context of feelings, relationships and values and not simply focus on the physical aspects of reproduction.

Planning, teaching and learning across age phases

Oak Tree School includes students with severe or moderate learning difficulties. To support our students understanding of relationships in general, and RSE more specifically, the teachers will differentiate the learning depending on needs and ability. For all students, both physical and cognitive development will inform the programme of study they are given.

The following is a summative overview of topics covered in each school department. More detailed information is available within the PSHE curriculum documents.

KS3

RSE; including friendships, families and people students can go to for support what is unacceptable and acceptable behaviour in a relationship, the importance of consent

- The importance of honesty, honesty and the concept of personal privacy, marriage and civil partnership (minimum age), personal space and boundaries, showing respect, and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate contact.
- Contraception, developing intimate relationships, resisting, and not applying, pressure to have sex.
- How to recognise and report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse
- Personal hygiene; including Puberty and menstruation, healthy eating and physical health.

KS4/5

Some students within KS4- 5 will carry on within the school to the age of 19.

Topics are bespoke to students' needs and cover the following areas as appropriate:

- Relationships – including friendships, families and people students can go to for support, what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.
- The importance of honesty, consent- permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy, characteristics of healthy relationships and marriage and civil partnership (minimum age)
- How to recognise and report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse
- Contraception, developing intimate relationships, resisting, and not applying, pressure to have sex.
- Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.
- Puberty and menstruation

Specialist Emerald Curriculum

Some students following the Emerald Curriculum will have multiple or severe learning difficulties or profound autism. For many students, their self-awareness and comprehension limits their ability to understand relationships in general and RSE more specifically. For this reason, teachers will differentiate the learning depending on needs and ability, as with all other subjects.

Topics are bespoke to students' needs and range from different relationships, friendships and families to public and private areas of the body.

Teaching Materials

Materials used at Oak Tree School must be in accordance with the RSHE framework and the law. Inappropriate images should not be used, nor should explicit material not directly related to explanation. We will ensure that students are protected from teaching and materials via the internet, or on paper, which are inappropriate, having regard to the age, ability and cultural background of the students concerned.

Clinical Input

The clinical team will be working closely with all staff to ensure that appropriate methods are used when teaching students. This will include AAC support in all areas and sensitive areas and OT regulation strategies. Clinical input will be needed when running 'girls group' to gradually introduce female students in more sensitive matters as their bodies grow and develop through puberty.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensures that all students make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensures RSE curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluates the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensures that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all students with SEND.
- Provides clear information to parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- Ensures that the personal development, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- Ensures the policy is published on the school's website and provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.

The Leadership team will:

The Leadership within the school will monitor school practice and review the Personal Development Policy and Scheme of Work to ensure that:

- All staff are up to date with developments in the subject by attending INSET, workshops, support groups, accessing books and other literature, and sharing this information with colleagues.
- Expertise and subject knowledge is shared through INSET, workshops, and staff meetings so that staff can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- Resources are well developed, well organised, labelled and accessible.
- Appropriate planning, teaching methods, activities and resources are being delivered.
- Both staff and parents are informed about our RSE policy and that the policy is implemented effectively.
- External agencies are used effectively and appropriately for the school RSE programme.
- All adults who work with students on these issues are aware of the school policy and that they work within this framework.

Teaching Staff will:

- All teachers are committed to delivering the PSHE and RSE curriculum.
- Staff are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of RSE. To this end, ground rules have been agreed to provide a common framework within which to teach and to deal with issues.
- Students will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (staff or student) should be expected to ask or answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.

- In all sex education and Science based lessons, only the correct names for body parts will be used {breast, penis, vagina, bottom}.
- Meanings of age-appropriate words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Sometimes an individual student will ask an explicit or difficult question in the school setting. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed later. Staff must use their skill and discretion in these situations and refer to SLT
- If a question or comment raises a Child Protection concern the DSL or deputy informed so that safeguarding procedures can be followed.

Parents will:

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we will:

- Work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects;
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child;
- Support parents who are finding it difficult to accept their children's developing sexuality;
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex education in the school;
- Encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- Liaise with parents so that wherever possible the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages.

Right to Withdraw

We acknowledge that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some, or all, of the topics directly related to sex education delivered within RSE up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.

Where the young person, at this point, is still not cognitively able to choose for themselves, we will be guided by the parents in delivering the most appropriate content for that student. If the young person is cognitively able and wishes to partake in sex education lessons rather than be withdrawn, staff will make arrangements for this to happen from three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.

If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the leader of the cluster their child is in, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in.

The government legislation does not allow parents to withdraw students from all other forms of Relationships' Education, including Health Education and Science based lessons on sexual reproduction. It is important that all students learn about relationships and understand their own health at the appropriate level for their understanding. We will make every effort to deliver that education in a way that respects the views of the students and parents and helps the students respect the views of others.