



ST. CATHERINE'S
COLLEGE
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

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Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

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Policy context and rationale

This relationships, sex and health education policy covers the St Catherine's College approach to teaching relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE). This policy has been subject to consultation with students, staff, parents and school governors. Student consultation has ensured that the needs of all students can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate RSHE curriculum that addresses relevant issues, informed by analysis of public health data and student priorities. Consultation methods have included all students evaluating their RSHE lessons each year and identifying their future educational needs. Parent feedback following the sharing of lesson plans and resources has also been included in our consultations.

Policy development

This policy has been developed using guidance from:

- The Department for Education (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education - Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies, Proprietors, Headteachers, Principals, Senior Leadership Teams, Teachers), updated 2021. [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97222/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_and_Health_Education_guidance.pdf)
- a model policy provided by East Sussex County Council.
- the Church of England Education Office (Principles and Charter for Faith Sensitive and Inclusive Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, 2019. [rshe-principles-and-charter_0.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1000/rshe-principles-and-charter_0.pdf)
- Valuing All God's Children - Guidance for Church of England schools on challenging homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying), 2019. [Layout 1 \(churchofengland.org\)](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1000/Layout_1.pdf)
- The Department for Education guidance - Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum: Information to help school leaders plan, develop and implement the new statutory curriculum, 2022. [Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97222/Plan_your_relationships_sex_and_health_curriculum.pdf)
- Faith, Relationships and Sex Education: Giving voice to young people of different faiths and none in regard to faith-sensitive relationships and sex education. Joanna E. M. Sell, University College London, 2019. [Faith, Relationships and Sex Education: Giving voice to young people of different faiths and none in regard to faith-sensitive relationships and sex education - UCL Discovery](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/learning-and-teaching/faith-relationships-and-sex-education)
- Flourishing for All: Anti-bullying Guidance for Church of England Schools, September 2024. [nse-flourishing-for-all-part-a-and-b-for-publication-september-2024-1.pdf](https://www.nse.org.uk/media/1000/flourishing-for-all-part-a-and-b-for-publication-september-2024-1.pdf)

Policy availability

Stakeholders can be informed about the policy by accessing a copy from the school website. Should a hard copy of the document be required, the school will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs,

ensuring equitable accessibility for all. The policy can be obtained in an alternative format by contacting Mr N Pittman (PSHE Coordinator).

Policy values, aims and objectives

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.

-Secretary of State Foreword

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance 2019

Our school's overarching aims and objectives for students are to prepare students to stand shoulder to shoulder with their peers: locally, nationally and globally, and to achieve their God-given potential. RSHE is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources, and classroom management of RSHE lessons. Our students are inspired and supported to be ambitious, hard-working, resilient and responsible. RSHE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. RSHE equips children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, to celebrate their sexuality and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing both now and in the future. We recognise the importance of RSHE in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled, and healthy lives. The overarching objective of RSHE is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development via the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law and provisions of the Equality Act, 2010. The Life Skills curriculum supports our students now and, in the future, to acquire the knowledge, understanding, and skills to:

- live healthy, safe, and responsible lives
- make effective and ambitious transitions and career choices
- reflect on their own values and attitudes, and explore the diversity of values and attitudes they encounter
- build their confidence, resilience and self-esteem
- be active and responsible local, national and global citizens.

As a Church of England Academy, our vision for RSHE is underpinned by two key biblical passages:

So, God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10b)

Everyone is treated with dignity as all people are made in the image of God and loved equally by God. All students have a right to an education which enables them to flourish and is set in a learning community where differences of lifestyle and opinion (within that which is permissible under UK law) are treated with

dignity and respect; bullying of all kinds is eliminated; and where they are free to be themselves and fulfil their potential without fear.

Effective RSHE can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by students to establish and maintain relationships. RSHE ensures children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

RSHE is approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving student health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes. The following principles are based on research evidence, supported by a wide range of leading organisations including the NSPCC, Barnardo's, The Children's Society and education unions. They are also supported by several MPs and Lords.

Principles of effective RSHE

RSHE provision at St Catherine's College:

- Is an identifiable part of our school curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the Key Stages.
- Is taught by staff regularly trained in RSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme, where appropriate).
- works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and how they can contribute at home.
- delivers lessons where students feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
- is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of students, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- gives a positive view of human sexuality with honest and medically accurate information so that students can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
- gives students opportunities to reflect on their values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex and nurture respect for different views.
- includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the School Health Service and other health and advice services including reliable information online.
- fosters gender equality and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in RSHE lessons and in everyday school life.
- meets the needs of all students with their diverse experiences including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- seeks students' views about RSHE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

Entitlement and equality of opportunity

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner. Teachers include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child is given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our students, their families and the wider whole-school community. RSHE is taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law to ensure all students have equal access to our RSHE curriculum. We do not use RSHE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another. We approach RSHE in a faith-sensitive and seek to understand and appreciate differences within and across the teachings of the faith and other communities the school serves. We give dignity and worth to the views of students from the faith and other communities represented in the school as part of ensuring that the Equality Act (2010) is applied in the school. We acknowledge that there is no hierarchy of protected characteristics in the Equality Act and that sometimes different protected characteristics can be in tension as they cannot necessarily be equally protected at all times.

Thorough consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect students' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances (including gender identity, faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community) in accordance with the school's inclusion policy.

SEND students are supported by Teacher Assistants in Life Skills lessons. A Teaching Assistant has received specific Relationships & Sex Education training to support SEND students should it be necessary to teach Relationship or Sex Education to SEND students outside of the classroom setting. Students who are internally excluded on a day when RSE is taught in Life Skills, usually attend Life Skills Week lessons.

Teaching and learning

The RSHE programme is taught as part of the Life Skills curriculum. It is led Mr N Pittman (PSHE Coordinator), taught by Tutors and Teaching Assistants, and supported by the School Health Service. All staff involved in the delivery of RSHE receive specialist training to ensure that students receive clear and consistent approaches to RSHE throughout their time at St Catherine's College. Staff are provided with narrated PowerPoint training presentations on the Life Skills curriculum and RSE in particular. Face-to-face training is offered and arranged for staff based on individual needs. Whole staff and individual training needs are identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal. Prior to teaching a Life Skills Week, staff are provided all the resources required for delivering clear and consistent lessons i.e. a scheme of work with five lesson plans, a PowerPoint presentation for each lesson, and a box file of lesson resources (e.g. worksheets, card-sorts). The School Health Service hold three lunchtime health promotion events per year and accept student referrals from staff, parents and students themselves.

On occasion external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSHE to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, our school will:

- Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials.

- Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and our published policy.
- Discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the students.
- Ask to see in advance the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan so that collectively we can ensure it meets the full range of students' needs (e.g. special educational needs).
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with our school's policy.
- Arrange for the visitor to be supervised/supported by a member of school staff at all times.
- Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning.

RSHE is taught through a range of teaching methodologies, including story-telling, drama, discussions, individual private reflection, quizzes and fact finding, value spectrums, debating, independent research and artistic presentations etc. This wide range of teaching strategies promotes engagement by all students, irrespective of preferred learning styles.

Curriculum

Most elements of the RSHE curriculum are a statutory requirement to teach to meet the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (last updated 13 September 2021) and The Equalities Act, 2010.

RSHE is taught through a 'spiral curriculum'. This approach means that students gain knowledge, develop values and acquire skills gradually by re-visiting core themes to build on prior learning. RSHE supports the school's commitment to safeguard students through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

Our intended RSHE curriculum may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our students are living and learning. Where possible the curriculum is complemented by themed assemblies and Theatre in Education performances.

The Secondary Statutory Curriculum

Relationships Education*	Families Respectful relationships including friendships Online and media Being safe
Sex Education*	Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
Health Education	Mental wellbeing Internet safety and harms Physical health and fitness Healthy eating Drugs, alcohol and tobacco Health and prevention Basic first aid Changing adolescent body

*For more detail, please see the Appendix 1.

The RSHE curriculum at St Catherine's College

There are three Life Skills Weeks during the academic year. One 60min lesson per day, on five consecutive days, is given to the teaching a Life Skills topic. These are led by tutors with their tutor groups. Two of the Life Skills Weeks have a predominantly RSHE focus. The Relationship and Sex Education lesson plans are predominantly based on the Norfolk Educator Solutions scheme.

Keeping Healthy & Safe (7-9); Finance (11): *Careers & Work (10)**

Year Group	7	8	9	10	11
Content	Road safety. Attitudes to mental health. Promoting emotional wellbeing. Knife crime. Sleep.	Digital resilience. Cyberbullying. Basic first aid. Unconscious (first aid). Water safety.	Unhealthy coping strategies. Healthy coping strategies Helping friends on a night out (risk and first aid). County lines. Health Survey.	The future of work. Rights and responsibilities at work. Health and safety at work. Applications. CV writing.	The economy Payslips and deductions. Taxes. Borrowing money. Gambling.

*Both the Year 10 'Careers and Work' topic and the Year 11 'Finance' topic include aspects of RSHE.

Relationships and Sex Education

Year Group	7 Relationships	8 Relationships & Sex Education	9 Relationships & Sex Education	10 Relationships & Sex Education	11 Relationships & Sex Education
Content	Friendships. Healthy relationships. Bullying and abuse. Seeking help and advice. Different identities.	HPV. Gender and sexuality. Healthy relationships. Marriage and the law. Sexting.	Self-esteem and relationships. Media messages and body image. Consent: my body, my choice. Contraception. STI prevention.	Body image and the media. Healthy relationships. Readiness for intimacy. Contraception. Contraception failure.	Testicular and breast examination. Managing unhealthy relationships. Consent and coercion. Barrier contraception. Teenage pregnancy and parenthood.

Some areas of the KS3 curriculum are delivered in subject lessons by predominantly specialist teachers
i.e. Sexual Reproduction & Puberty in Science,
Online Safety in ICT,
Personal Finance in Maths,
Healthy Eating in Food Technology,
Health and fitness in PE.

Assessment

Students' learning is assessed at the end of every topic to ensure that students are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment activities are implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that students do not feel under pressure. Self-assessment tasks confirm students understanding of the topics.

Examples of assessment methods used are:

1. Life Skills lessons have planned, sequenced and clearly shared learning outcomes (the most important concepts that pupils need to know). At regular points within a lesson, students' progress towards these outcomes is checked and any misunderstandings are corrected ('Golden Nuggets').
2. Tutor assessment in Life Skills lessons e.g. baseline, and mid/end of lesson assessments, quizzes.
3. Student assessment - summative self-assessment reflection activity on the learning outcomes. This assessment informs which aspects of the taught sessions should be followed up in the tutor sessions.

The quality of RSHE teaching and learning is monitored through RSHE learning walks, team teaching and informal drop-ins conducted by subject leads and/or members of the senior leadership team. The observations and findings of which are used to identify and inform future staff training needs.

Responding to students' questions

There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within the subjects of RSHE. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture. We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of a class working agreement. At the end of lessons, students are provided with an opportunity to ask questions in an open setting and are also provided with an opportunity to raise anonymous questions using an anonymous question box. Teachers will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by students during the lesson. Teachers may delay answering a student's question if they need time to consult with a colleague or the school leadership team to construct an appropriate answer.

Teachers can refuse to answer a question that they feel is inappropriate and will never answer personal questions about their own body, personal circumstances or lifestyle choices. If a teacher does not answer a question, the student will have the reasons clearly explained and the teacher will work with the student to identify suitable sources of information where they can obtain an answer to their question. This may include encouraging the student to ask a parent/carer or trusted adult at home.

Confidentiality, signposting and handling disclosures

The school's responsibility to safeguard students through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to our curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

At the beginning of RSHE teaching the class discuss and create a 'working agreement'. Confidentiality is included within this agreement so students are clear of the limits of confidentiality that can be guaranteed by a teacher.

Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within RSHE avoids students feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels comfortable. This strategy makes RSHE more accessible to all students including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

Teachers signpost students to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Information is shared during lessons, and students have access to reliable websites and helplines in their college diaries. Teachers also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise on topic coverage so that the school can be responsive to student's pastoral needs and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required. Parents are informed of the signposting of students that occurs in lessons. In particular, they are provided with a weblink to the services provided by the East Sussex NHS School Health Service.

Teachers conduct RSHE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will then deal with the matter in line with our school's safeguarding policy.

Involving parents and carers

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children in RSHE and that RSHE is most effective when it is collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

Each year, prior to the teaching of RSHE, the school provides information to parents and carers by email on the RSHE topics being taught (see example in Appendix 2). Parents and carers are encouraged to support their child's learning through discussion of the topics at home. The school also operates an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss RSHE at relevant times throughout the school year. Within the parent email letter, weblinks are provided to 'Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education at your child's secondary school: a guide for parents'; the college's Life Skills curriculum statement; and the college's Relationships and Sex Education policy

Feedback from parents on the RSHE curriculum is welcomed and responded to. Points of view are carefully considered, and if appropriate, used to improve the RSHE curriculum content and delivery.

The vast majority of RSHE is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers are only able to request that their child is excused from Sex Education, taught outside of the national curriculum for science. If a parent wishes their child to be excused from some or all of the non-statutory Sex Education, they should discuss this with the Headteacher, making clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The Headteacher will outline to parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents/carers propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once a decision has been made, parents/carers must inform the school in writing stating their reasons as to why they would like their child withdrawn.

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, our school will respect a parent/carers' request to have their child excused from non-statutory sex education 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 should arrange to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. The school will document this process.

This process is the same for students with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Headteacher may want to take a student's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. If a student is excused from sex education, the school ensures that the student receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

The Management of RSHE

Listed below are those involved with the management of the RSHE curriculum.

Role	Responsibilities
Local Governing Body	Engaging with the consultation of the development of the RSHE policy. Approving the RSHE policy annually. Holding the Headteacher to account for policy implementation.
Headteacher	Ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school. Managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE.
PSHE Coordinator	Developing the RSHE curriculum delivered in Life Skills lessons. Providing parents/carers with RSHE curriculum information annually. Providing RSHE staff training. Monitoring the delivery of RSHE. Reviewing the RSHE policy annually.
Tutors	Delivering RSHE education. Monitoring students' development in RSHE. Providing curriculum feedback to the PSHE Coordinator.
Teaching Assistants	Supporting SEND students during Life Skills lessons.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Assessing and responding to concerns raised by staff, and disclosures from students.

Links to other school policies and curriculum

This policy complements the following:

- Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

[St Catherine's College - Policies and Statutory Documents \(stcatherines.college\)](#)

- Anti-Bullying Policy

[Anti-Bullying Policy Sept 2023-2024.docx](#)

- Our Curriculum

[St Catherine's College - Our Curriculum \(stcatherines.college\)](#)

- Life Skills Curriculum

[St Catherine's College - Life Skills \(stcatherines.college\)](#)

Monitoring

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the PSHE Coordinator with assistance from Heads of Year through learning walks, and the review of students' assessments and evaluations.

Students' development in RSHE is monitored by tutors as part of the internal assessment in Life Skills lessons.

All students are consulted about the RSHE curriculum content and delivery at two points in the year to ensure it remains responsive to emerging needs. Additional information from students is collected from the annual anonymous Year 9 'My Health, My School' Survey. Feedback from parents, and staff (via a Microsoft Form evaluations) are included in the policy and curriculum review process. The policy, curriculum content and delivery are updated accordingly.

Review

This policy is reviewed by the PSHE Coordinator and approved by the Local Governing Body every year. A review may be sooner if the RSHE curriculum is amended, for example in response to emerging themes, changing student needs or introduction of new legislation and guidance.

The next review date of this policy is currently set for January 2026.

Appendix 1

Statutory guidance: Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) (Secondary), Updated 13 September 2021.

(This is a section of the statutory guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education).

Document hyperlink: [Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) \(Secondary\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97222/relationships-sex-education-secondary-2021.pdf)

The aim of RSE is to give young people 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 also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.

This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Many teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

RSE should provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education. Teachers should build on the foundation of Relationships Education and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, pupils should also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. This teaching should enable pupils to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.

Pupils should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They should be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing.

As in primary, secondary Relationships Education can be underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. These should include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth. There are many ways in which

secondary schools should support the development of these attributes, for example by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

Pupils should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships. This should be integrated appropriately into the RSE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson.

It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Schools may choose to explore faith, or other perspectives, on some of these issues in other subjects such as Religious Education.

Pupils should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Key aspects of the law relating to sex which should be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, should also be addressed sensitively and clearly. Schools should address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). They should also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, pupils may also need support to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk. Schools should also be mindful that for pupils who are or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the school may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.

Internet safety should also be addressed. Pupils should be taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This will include how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Pupils should have a strong understanding of how data is generated, collected, shared and used online, for example, how personal data is captured on social media or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them.

Some pupils are also exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.

By the end of secondary school

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary.

Families

Pupils 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 – for example, 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), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

Respectful relationships, including friendships

Pupils should know:

- 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, 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 (for example, 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

Pupils 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, for example 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

Pupils 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

Pupils 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, 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

The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people, and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Pupils should be 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 and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

Appendix 2 Example of an Arbor Mail Merge Email Letter sent to Parents Prior to a Life Skills Week (Year 10 RSE Life Skills Week)

Dear (*parent salutation*)

Next week, we will start our first Life Skills Week of the academic year. During the week the (*student forename*) will receive five lessons on the topic 'Relationships & Sexual Health Education' (one per day). The week runs from Monday ____ to Friday ____ (*month*).

The lessons are based on reliable sources of information, include the law and legal rights, and distinguish between fact and opinion. They promote safe, equal, caring and happy relationships and discuss real life issues appropriate to the age of the students. Students are encouraged to reflect on their values and be aware of influences like their peers, media, faith and culture.

It is our practice for the teacher and the tutor group to agree a Working Agreement before discussing sensitive issues. The purpose of the agreements is to allow students to participate in a happy and safe environment. The tutor group agreements include use of appropriate language; ensuring that sensitive discussions in class are treated with a level of confidentiality and not repeated outside of the lesson; not to disclose personal details about yourselves or others.

The topics to be covered in the Year 10 lessons are: Body image & the media; Healthy relationships; Readiness for intimacy; Contraception; When contraception fails, including emergency contraception, parenthood, adoption, abortion.

For advice and guidance, we encourage students to talk to either a parent, teacher or other reliable adult, or use reliable online resources. There is a list of reliable support services in your child's student diary. At the end of each Life Skills lesson, we promote the NHS Health for Teens website <https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/> and the East Sussex School Health Service. Further information about this service, including a short video for parents, is available here: [School Health | East Sussex](#).

Further information regarding our Life Skills curriculum is available on the college website. The links below will take you directly to the curriculum statement and the Relationships and Sex Education policy.

[St Catherine's College - Life Skills](#)
[St Catherine's College RSHE Policy](#)

If you have any further questions regarding the Life Skills Week, please feel free to email me.

Thank you and best wishes.

Neil Pittman
PSHE Co-ordinator