

# Relationships & Sex Education Policy

## St Piers School

This policy outlines St Piers School’s approach to education for all the children and young people we support, on relationships and their sexual wellbeing. The policy and procedure complies with relevant legislation and guidance on sexual relationships, including for those young adults with learning difficulties.

St Piers School is committed to the teaching of RSE and promoting the understanding and knowledge of our students around healthy relationships, sex education and consent as well as ensuring our students know their rights.

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## 1. Aims

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

- Provide tailored learning opportunities for students to learn about their own physical and emotional development and to feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues in a safe and supportive environment.
- Prepare Students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help Students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy and to have an understanding of why these qualities are important in their daily lives
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships and allow students to develop their own sense of self and to feel valued as individuals
- Teach Students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Teach Students the importance of consent and what is meant by this

St Piers School recognises that relationships and sexuality are important components of our students' lives. They have the right to receive both support and education regarding sexual health, wellbeing and relationships to support them in developing their own sexual identity. Students also have the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation and so we must ensure this is also upheld.

St Piers School believes that empowering students with the knowledge to make informed decisions and choices with regards to sex, sexual health and relationships will lead to a safer and more fulfilling life. Both our residential and education services will offer support and guidance to students in this area as appropriate to their needs.

## 2. Statutory requirements

As a non-maintained special educational needs school, we have elected to provide relationships education to all Students in primary, secondary and in the 16-19 provision, as highlighted under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

We are not required to provide sex education in our primary phase, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. Sex education is taught in more detail in our secondary phase and continues to be worked on through the Personal Development framework in our 16-19 provision

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
- At St Piers school, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

### **3. Policy development**

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

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly Students want from their RSE through the student council
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

### **4. Definition**

Due to the complex needs of our students, RSE teaching will be individualised to the student and coverage of the curriculum will be at the class teacher's discretion after assessment of their current knowledge around the subject.

Baseline assessments and where applicable risk assessments will be completed to ascertain the students' prior knowledge, necessary learning and the relevance of learning in sex and relationships education RSE. Programmes will be put together using or adapting the criteria to suit student needs and to develop a meaningful programme for the individual.

Students receive education focusing on consent and their individual rights. They are also made aware of who they can talk to in school or at home if they are worried or concerned about their relationships. The safeguarding team have their pictures and numbers displayed in the school and an independent advocacy service is available to all students.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of Students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

## 5. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum forms part of our Personal Development curricula and is set out as per Appendix 1 and is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure the needs of our individual students are being met

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, Students and staff as well as working with the council for disabled children and the sex education forum. We ensure to take into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that Students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Lower School sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings through puberty
- Correct terminology for body parts, including private body parts
- What consent means and why it is important
- Middle School & Upper School sex education will focus on:
- Consent and legal ages for sexual relationships
- Sexual intercourse and intimate relationships
- Pregnancy
- Sexual health and contraception
- Masturbation and private time
- Help and support

Full curriculum available on request

## 6. Delivery of RSE

At St Piers school, RSE is delivered through a combination of group learning and individual focused work to meet the needs of individuals. Learning is also embedded in the waking day curriculum and is a focus for all students across the residential special school.

- Relationships education is taught in focused lessons as well as through our school rules and values. Students engage in different learning activities to increase their understanding of positive relationships and how they can be a 'good friend' as well as building an expectation of mutual kindness and respect from others. Contextual learning happens throughout the school day, including break and lunch times, for students to be able to use their learning in real scenarios, giving them a sense of achievement and pride
- Due to the complex needs of the students at St Piers, an individualised and personalised approach to RSE needs to be considered and in place for effective learning to happen. Students are baselined using the St Piers Personal Development framework and teachers will work with the transdisciplinary team, including parents, to decide on appropriate learning goals and approaches to learning for individual students

- Sex education and sensitive topic taught in the secondary and 16-19 phase are also student specific. We aim to teach our students in a structured way, ensuring prior learning is in place before moving on to topics which could cause difficult situations to arise. Topics such as masturbation may not necessarily be taught to students who are yet to grasp and understand the difference between private and public. This is to ensure the safety of our students both in school and in their wider communities.

RSE at St Piers school also uses other interventions to support our students learning in this area.

- Emotional Literacy is provided through trained ELSAs to help students to understand the more complex aspects of RSE and to provide an individualised and personalised approach.
- The Positive behaviour support (PBS) team also meet with class groups regularly to discuss incidents of behaviour and how the team around the learner can further support the development and understanding students have of their own behaviour.
- Therapy input is also available to St Piers school. The sensory clinic, run through OT, assist class groups in identifying sensory needs of students and applying appropriate strategies and sensory equipment to help students to regulate their own behaviours. Play therapy is also available to students through an internal referral to support with students' mental health, behaviour and empowering them to be able to form lasting, positive relationships.
- RSE is taught within the Personal Development curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum. Aspects of RSE can also be found in the Communication and Interaction curriculum as well as through enrichment days and activities.

**Primary age learners:** RSE focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and close positive relationships
- Friendships
- Managing hurtful behaviours and bullying
- Online relationships
- Safe relationships
- My Growing and changing

For more information about our RSE curriculum, please contact the school office where the curriculum schemes of work can be shared.

**Secondary age learners:** RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Positive relationships
- Relationship values
- Forming and maintaining respectful relationships
- Consent
- Bullying, abuse and discrimination
- Online and media
- Sex Education including intimate and sexual relationships and sexual health

For more information about our RSE curriculum, please contact the school office where the curriculum schemes of work can be shared.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism, or the illegal use of drugs.

### **6.1 Inclusivity**

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of Students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all Students' experiences

During lessons, makes Students feel:

- Safe and supported
- Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

Make sure that Students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:

- A whole class setting
- Small groups or targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats
- Real life scenarios and role play
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed, taking into account individual learning progression and attainment.

## 6.2 Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to Students' experiences and won't provoke distress

## 7. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to Students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
  - Are age-appropriate
  - Are in line with Students' developmental stage

Comply with:

- This policy
- The Teachers' Standards
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with

Be clear on:

- What they're going to say
  - Their position on the issues to be discussed
  - Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
  - Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
  - Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
  - Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
  - Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
  - Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- We won't, under any circumstances:
- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
  - Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

### **8.1 The governing board**

The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the head of school to account for its implementation.

### **8.2 The Head of School**

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 9).

### **8.3 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

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

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the head of school.

The Personal Development lead will be responsible of providing ongoing training and support to the teaching team, to ensure high quality RSE teaching is taking place

## 8.4 Students

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

## 9. Parents' right to withdraw

### Primary age learners

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the head of school.

Alternative schoolwork will be given to Students who are withdrawn from sex education.

### Secondary age learners

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the head of school.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The head of school will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action in meeting with parents to discuss concerns. Alternative schoolwork will be given to Students who are withdrawn from sex education.

## 10. Training

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

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

## 11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Danny Hulme, Assistant Head, through:

- Planning and work scrutiny

- Learning walks
- Review of assessments
- Teacher and lesson observations

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Danny Hulme, Assistant Head, annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body and the Executive Principal

**This procedure is agreed by the Executive Principal and will be implemented by**

**St Piers School**

**Signed:** 

**Date: September 2025**

**Date of next review: September 2026**  
*(or sooner if there are changes to government guidelines)*

<b>Version table</b>			
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