



# Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Ratified by Governors July 2024

To be reviewed July 2025 (or earlier if national guidance changes)

# Maidstone Grammar School Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Please note that the RSE Curriculum sits, to a great extent, within the PSHCE curriculum.

An overview of the PSHCE spiral curriculum and topics can be found at:

<https://mgs.kent.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Curriculum-Map-PSHCE-2024-25.pdf>

## 1. Aims

The aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at our school are to:

- › Deliver a high quality, evidence based and age appropriate RSE program as part of our wider School Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) program
- › Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- › Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- › Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- › Help pupils understand that everybody is different and the importance of accepting our individual differences
- › Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- › Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

## 2. Statutory Requirements

At Maidstone Grammar School we teach RSE as set out in this policy and according to the Department for Education's *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers:*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1019542/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1019542/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

As a maintained secondary school we must provide RSE to all pupils according to the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

## 3. Policy Development

The following steps have contributed to the development of this policy:

1. The Head of Department for PSHCE, supported by the Deputy Head Pastoral, regularly review the RSE content of the PSHCE program drawing upon relevant national and local guidance, relevant training, as well as a range of good quality resources to ensure a high quality, relevant and up to date program.
2. Parents/ Carers and any interested parties are able to view the RSE content via the PSHCE Curriculum Map on the School website at <https://www.mgs.kent.sch.uk/the-academic-curriculum/subjects/pshce-and-rse/>

3. The policy is shared with members of the MGS Parent Forum. It is also shared with all parents annually in Term 1 together with a summary of topics covered in the safeguarding and key policies bulletin.
4. Pupil consultation – Pupil views are gathered regularly in the PSHCE forum which meets weekly as part of the PSHCE club. Pupil evaluation, assessment and feedback in relation to units covered in the PSHCE program also informs curriculum development.
5. The policy is shared with Governors for ratification

## 4. Definition

RSE is learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that gives pupils the confidence to make sound decisions when facing risks and other challenges. It includes teaching about friendship, the importance of caring, stable and mutually supportive relationships with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship.

**RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation nor does it promote particular types of sexuality or gender identity etc.** It teaches children and young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others, to build self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity so that they can develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

RSE will outline: that there are different types of committed, stable relationships; the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships; the importance of marriage as a relationship choice and why it must be entered into freely; how relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for raising children; roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children; characteristics of successful parenting; how to judge when relationships have become unsafe; how to seek help or advice and report concerns about others.

## 5. Curriculum

Our PSHCE curriculum is set out in the PSHCE section of the School website at: <https://mgs.kent.sch.uk/pastoral/pshce/>

We may need to adapt this as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age, needs, emotional and physical development of pupils.

Our “spiral” approach means that pupils meet and revisit many of these topics on a number of occasions, exploring them in increasingly greater depth as they move up through the school.

Full details of what the DfE’s statutory RSE Guidance says that secondary schools must cover by the end of Key Stage 4 is given in **Appendix 1**.

## 6. Equal Opportunities / Safeguarding

The School has duties under the Equalities Act 2010 to ensure that pupils are not discriminated against because of their sex, race, disabilities, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity. PSHCE lessons (including RSE and Health Education) provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences, supported by an experienced member of staff. Prejudiced views will be challenged and equality promoted. Any bullying or inappropriate behaviour, including in relation to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation, will be dealt with in accordance with the School’s behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies which are available on the School website.

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school environment where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Safeguarding training is provided to all staff and we teach all pupils how to report concerns.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the School's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed.

Where pupils raise issues or ask questions which go beyond the scope of the curriculum or are not considered to be age appropriate then staff will respond in a sensitive and age appropriate manner. If they feel equipped to answer the question directly they will do so, recognizing that this can provide a supportive alternative to pupils searching for un-vetted information online. If they do not feel equipped to answer the question directly or have concerns they may put the question to one side and seek advice from the Head of PSHCE or Deputy Head Pastoral (who is also the Safeguarding Lead).

## **7. Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught within Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculum at MGS.

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum as part of the Science national curriculum and GCSE course specifications. These elements are delivered by Science teachers. Other aspects are referred to in Religious Studies (RS) lessons, including as part of the Islamic Practices and Christian Practices units at GCSE, delivered by RS teaching staff.

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

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

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure 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, foster parents/carers amongst others structures and some children may have a different structure of support around them (e.g. Looked After Children or Young Carers).

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Governors**

The Governors approve the RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see Section 8).

### **Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- › Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- › Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- › Monitoring progress / evaluating impact of the PSHCE curriculum

- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils 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 Headteacher.

The Teachers of PSHCE are:

Mr M Holmes (Head of Department) who is very experienced and delivers almost all the lessons across the school.

Mrs A-M Martin

## **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity acknowledging and respecting individual differences.

## **Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

The School works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND. Staff are expected to differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to PSHCE, RSE and health education.

## **9. Parents' Right to Withdraw**

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 2** of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher, Deputy Head Pastoral or Head of PSHCE will communicate with parents in relation to the request and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

All parents / carers are informed of the right to withdraw annually in the Deputy Head's start of year safeguarding bulletin.

## **10. Training**

The Head of Department is highly trained and experienced in the delivery of RSE.

The Head of Department delivers the entire PSHCE programme with the exception of one class which is delivered by another teacher who is fully briefed by the HOD.

The Head of Department consults external agencies / groups outside the school where appropriate, such as school nurses, sexual health professionals or our School Liaison Police Officer, to provide support in the delivery of RSE.

## **11. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Mr M Holmes (Head of PSHCE) and Miss R Johnson (Deputy Head Pastoral) through:

Regular line management meetings, Performance Appraisal and lesson observations.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers with its bespoke assessment system. Pupils 'Attitude to Learning' is graded three times per year and the topics covered each year are provided in a written report to parents.

This policy will be reviewed by Mr M Holmes and Miss R Johnson regularly. At every review, the policy will be approved by Governors.

## **12. Complaints**

Parents or Carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the RSE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints policy.

**Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school pupils should know:**

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</li> <li>• How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</li> <li>• The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</li> <li>• The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</li> <li>• That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</li> <li>• What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</li> <li>• What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</li> <li>• The impact of viewing harmful content</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</li> <li>• How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>



TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</li> <li>• That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</li> <li>• That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</li> <li>• The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</li> <li>• The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</li> <li>• How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</li> <li>• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	