

THORPE HALL

SCHOOL

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy – Upper School

1. Background

Thorpe Hall School (Upper School) aims to provide high quality and age-appropriate teaching of Relationship and Sex education to help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. This teaching also contributes to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society.

Although these are important educational subjects in their own right, Thorpe Hall School believes that learning about relationships and sex promotes well-being.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help children and young people develop knowledge and attributes to support their own, and others', well-being and help them to become successful and happy adults, who make a meaningful contribution to society.

2. Aims

The aim of RSE is to give pupils the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It will enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage, civil partnership or other type of committed relationship. It will also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex and the vital importance of consent. It will 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.

The RSE programme, delivered through PSHE lessons throughout Upper school, will enable pupils:

- to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful;
- to understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect and to understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing;
- to be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way;
- 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, FGM and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk;

- to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and when to report issues to keep them safe online;
- to, within the law, be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

3. Statutory Requirements

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

4. Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's:

[Safeguarding Policy](#)

[Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

[PSHE Policy](#)

5. Delivery of the programme

The RSE programme will be delivered through PSHE Lessons throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 and as part of the Science curriculum. PSHE and Science teachers are supported in their delivery and teaching resources by the Heads of PSHE and Science who will periodically provide training and opportunities to train with outside agencies. The Head of PSHE will use various sources to support and guide PSHE teachers, including the PSHE Association, of which the school is a member. The Heads of PSHE and Science will draw up a Programme of Study which will lay out the way in which RSE is taught to be age-appropriate and accessible to all levels of ability and need.

6. RSE Content

The School will continue to develop the knowledge of topics specified for primary schools and, in addition, cover the following content by the end of Year 11:

6.1. 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 and civil partnerships are, including their legal status e.g. that marriage and civil partnerships carry 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 the raising of children.
- how to: determine whether peers, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationships is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships);
- and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

6.2. Respectful relationships, including friendships

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (both on and offline) including: trust, respect, honesty, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- 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 tolerance and respect to others and others' beliefs, including people in positions of authority.
- 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 of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.)
- that everyone is unique and equal.

6.3. Online and Media

Pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply online and offline.
- 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 often 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 against the law.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

6.4. Being safe

Pupils should know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment and domestic abuse 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 (on and offline).

6.5. 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, 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.
- 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 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.
- how 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.

7. Safeguarding

Where appropriate teachers will direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is inappropriate for staff to give pupils personal or individualised advice on matters such as contraception.

Where a teacher becomes aware that a pupil has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the teacher will ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications of their behaviour. The teacher should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8. Parental Involvement and the Right to Withdraw

The School acknowledges the key role that Parents play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

Parents will be:

- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of RSE;
- Encouraged to participate in the development of RSE through the sharing of this policy;
- Able to discuss any concerns directly with the School.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request, the Headteacher will discuss the request with the parent and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the School will respect the Parent's request to withdraw their 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 provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. The School will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

There is no right to withdraw from Sex Education as taught as part of the Science curriculum.

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