



## Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

### Rationale

It is a statutory requirement that the school provides Relationships and Sex Education to its' students (Education Act, 2002, Children and Social Work Act 2017, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Statutory guidance 2020).

At Ashmole the Relationships and Sex Education programme is designed to support our students in making informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. The programme we deliver has two main strands. Firstly, it involves the knowledge of physical development and an understanding of aspects of sexual behaviour. Secondly, it involves seeking to understand the broader emotional implications surrounding relationships and sex and to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of students, at school and in wider society. Our aim is to ensure students develop resilience to challenges which they may face and to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

Sex and Relationships Education will appear on our curriculum in a variety of ways with the majority of this taught through our Personal, Health, Social and Economic Education programmes. Other areas of the curriculum, which support students' learning and development, include:

- i) the pastoral curriculum taught during tutor time
- ii) a variety of curricular areas, especially Science and Religious Studies
- iii) through the use of specialist external agencies (where this need is identified) either as part of the planned assembly programme or a collapsed timetable day.

### Principles

- To foster in students a feeling of self worth, and to develop their personal and social skills to better equip them to face up to and solve personal problems.
- To encourage responsible and safe attitudes and behaviour in the students we teach.
- To encourage an exploration of feelings, morality, right and wrong and emotions through small group or class discussion.
- To promote the value of stable relationships and family life and to understand and respect different forms of relationships which are recognised under the Equality Act of 2010.
- To allow students to identify the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships and where to seek help and advice from reputable sources.
- To ensure students fully understand the meaning of coercive behaviour or sexual harassment and the type of behaviour which constitutes this as well as the consequences under the law.
- To provide pupils with an understanding of the biological elements of puberty, reproduction and contraception.
- To provide students with information, knowledge and facts on sexual matters, including HIV/Aids and sexually transmitted infections and how they can protect themselves against such risks.

- To understand the roles and responsibilities of effective parenting and to provide students with the knowledge on matters relating to fertility, miscarriage, pregnancy and abortion.
- To raise awareness of the risks of the online world including sexual exploitation and provide tools on how to manage online risks safely.
- To support parents in their responsibility for the teaching of these sensitive areas

## Delivery of Relationships and Sex Education

- RSE is co-coordinated by the Head of PSHEE (Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education) who is responsible for planning, implementing and reviewing the programme for the school.
- The majority of RSE topics are delivered within the PSHEE curriculum by a team of dedicated teachers.
- The school also works in partnership with sexual health professionals from specialist agencies to deliver information sessions on sexual health and wellbeing to students where appropriate.
- The sex and relationships education programme will take into account the personal, cultural and religious sensitivities of parents and pupils and seek to educate all whilst respecting the rights of protected characteristics under the Equality Act of 2010.
- The sex and relationships education programme will be appropriate to the emotional, physical and intellectual maturity of the students. Topics will be introduced at an age appropriate time as guided by government guidance and signposted by relevant professional bodies such as the PHSE Association.
- Questions on a range of issues will inevitably arise in any subjects at any time. In this context questions should be answered accurately, honestly, sensitively and appropriate information given where available.

## Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE (with the exception of those parts of the programme taught as part of the National Curriculum order for Science). There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education.

Parents/carers wishing to exercise their right to withdraw their child are advised to contact the PSHEE coordinator to discuss any issues of concern.

Alternative arrangements will be made for any child who is withdrawn from RSE.

## What we teach

Students will be taught the majority of the following content during Key Stage 3 and 4 with important reminders, or more age appropriate content, discussed at Key Stage 5. Specific detail on each topic and when this is taught is available on our PHSEE course outlines. Course outlines are designed in line with statutory government regulations on teaching Relationships and Sex Education.

**Online and media:** Managing relationships online and risks of sexual grooming or exploitation and how students can protect themselves. Managing peer pressure and creating, sending or distributing sexual imagery

**Respectful Relationships and Friendships:** characteristics of healthy and unhealthy friendships and relationships, challenging stereotypes and educating students on sexual harassment and the law.

**Families:** That there are different types of committed relationships and outlining the legal status of all forms of recognised relationships. The importance of marriage and effective parenting.

**Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health:** The importance of delaying sexual relationships until the age of consent and also until students are emotionally ready. Facts surrounding reproductive health, fertility, pregnancy miscarriage and options when pregnant. Facts surrounding STI's, HIV and Aids and forms of protection. Where students can get relevant help and support on any related matters.

**Physical Well-being:** Key facts about puberty and adolescence; physical and emotional impacts

Pupils will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when 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
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

### How the subject is reviewed

The RSE programme will be reviewed and adapted where relevant improvements are identified. The review will take various forms including the views of students and teaching staff as well as keeping up to date with further statutory guidance or to meet the changing needs of our students.

Status: Statutory

Reviewed by: Governing Committee

Date of Next Review: