



# King's College

## TAUNTON

### **Relationships and Sex Education** **(RSE) Policy**

**Policy Date:** September 2025

#### **Responsibility**

**Individual:** Deputy Head (Pastoral)

**Review Cycle:** (Annual)

**Next scheduled review:** September 2026

**Last review:** September 2025



### **1. Introduction**

This policy covers King's College Taunton's (KCT) whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

At King's we provide RSE education which is informative, holistic, inclusive and needs-led, offered to all pupils predominantly as part of the PSHE programme of study. We believe that through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality, mutual respect, our Christian ethos and celebration of difference.

This policy has been developed in line with the statutory government guidance [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#) made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This legislation has made Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

We will review the policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme continues to meet the needs of our pupils. The policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies e.g. the Anti-Bullying Policy (18), Behaviour Policy (19), the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (20), and the PSHE Policy (44).

Named Governor for RSE: Charis Cavaghan-Pack

Head of PSHE: Caroline Condy

### **2. Definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**

We define RSE as learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. The aim of RSE is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships, and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing. It is designed to be age and stage appropriate to best meet the needs of our pupils, within the context of our wider community and within the ethos of KCT.

We believe that high quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Evidence shows that effective RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.



Our RSE curriculum is also designed to fulfil the definition below, which is from the Government Guidance:

*'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.'* **p25 Government Guidance RSE**

### **3. Parental Right of Withdrawal**

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE.

**However**, all children will have the right to opt into sex education three terms before they turn 16 and the school will make arrangements for this to happen. In practice, this means that when a child turns 15, they have the right to be taught sex education if they want to.

Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education.  
Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education.  
Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the science curriculum.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents/carers to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.

Should a parent/carer decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the Head to discuss their concerns. The Head will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns or objections to the content of the curriculum. If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the Head in writing and the school will keep a record of this.



Except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents'/carers' 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 make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. We will remind parents/carers annually that the request to withdraw is still in place and invite them to confirm whether they still want it.

#### **4. RSE Teaching**

The main provision of RSE is through planned, timetabled PSHE lessons in Third, Fourth, Fifth and Lower Sixth Form, providing a safe environment for delivery. The curriculum programme is developed by the Head of PSHE in conjunction with the Deputy Heads (Pastoral and Academic) and the views of teachers, pupils and parents/carers.

A team of PSHE teachers deliver the spiral curriculum which covers a wide variety of topics in a timely way and which is age and developmentally appropriate, to meet the needs of our pupils, including those pupils with SEND. It is inclusive of all sexual and gender identities, races, cultures, disabilities and additional needs.

The programme is delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (for example when teaching about external body parts). School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when teaching RSE.

Elements of RSE are also discussed within tutor time, in boarding houses, in whole-school assemblies, and in other relevant curriculum areas e.g. science. The Head of PSHE works with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure a holistic and joined up approach to what is taught in RSE. We use external experts and agencies to deliver some aspects of RSE, offering invaluable and up to date information, support and advice on the teaching of RSE at King's. Any external visitor will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy.

We will ensure that:

- There is appropriate planning, preparatory and follow up work for the session.
- The visitor understands the cohort of children involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics. They will also be made aware of any specific issues relating to child protection.

We also subscribe to Teen Tips Wellbeing Hub for Schools which offers 24/7 support for pupils, parents/carers and staff by way of advice, support and answers on a range of topics, including RSE. <https://www.teentips.co.uk/wellbeing-hub/>



Ongoing Learning Objectives for PSHE lessons:

- Pupils should be able to weigh up evidence and views to formulate their own values and viewpoints.
- Pupils should be able to reflect upon, assess and justify their beliefs and values and use them to support decision-making as they become more independent.
- Pupils should show respect, empathy, acceptance and tolerance of others, regardless of differences.
- Pupils should be able to contribute meaningfully to discussion and debate on issues which are important to them.
- Pupils should be able to recognise that healthy lifestyle behaviours improve their capacity to learn and thrive in a variety of contexts.
- Pupils should demonstrate an understanding of how and when to seek help in different situations, and how to support their peers.
- Pupils should have the opportunity to study RSE to understand themselves and the world around them.
- Pupils should be encouraged to engage in discussion and deeper thinking to reinforce the PSHE values.

### **5. RSE Curriculum Content**

Our PSHE curriculum encompasses the following areas with respect to RSE:

- Respectful, tolerant and healthy relationships, including friendships and families.
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health and consent.
- Child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and violence.
- The law and safeguarding, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Equality, diversity, prejudice and stereotyping including LGBTQ+, race, religion and disability.
- Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including the use of social media.
- Impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing.

For full details of the curriculum, please see the PSHE Policy (44).

Our regular visiting speakers from '[It Happens Education](#)' deliver RSE talks/workshops to pupils in all year groups, deliver teacher training (available to PSHE teachers, boarding staff and the wider staff body), and also deliver online sessions for parents/carers.



<b>Third Form</b>	<p><b>PUBERTY &amp; THE ADOLESCENT BODY</b></p> <p>What impact does the media and social media have on body image? Sustainable period products What is body confidence/self-esteem? Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</p> <p><b>HEALTHY &amp; UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS</b></p> <p>Stages of relationships &amp; relationship expectations What is love? Romantic &amp; sexual/intimate relationships Sexual identity</p> <p><b>THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM</b></p> <p>Why do people have sex? What time is the right time? Virginity &amp; age of consent</p> <p><b>INTRODUCTION TO STIs</b></p> <p>With a focus on HIV &amp; AIDS Understanding contraception – barrier, hormonal &amp; emergency methods</p>
<b>Fourth Form</b>	<p><b>HEALTHY &amp; UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS</b></p> <p>Different types of relationships Consent &amp; coercion What is ‘normal’ in teenage relationships? Forced &amp; arranged marriage, &amp; honour based violence (HBV)</p> <p><b>THE SEX WE SEE</b></p> <p>Sexual images &amp; videos Pornography - How does it affect relationships and expectations?</p> <p><b>CONTRACEPTION, RISKY BEHAVIOURS &amp; STIs</b></p> <p>Excuses/pressures for not using contraception Pressures of sexual relationships Condom demonstration lesson</p> <p><b>FERTILITY &amp; PREGNANCY CHOICES</b></p> <p>Pregnancy testing &amp; unplanned pregnancy Abortion &amp; choices Miscarriage</p>



<b>Fifth Form</b>	<p><b>HEALTHY &amp; UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS</b></p> <p>Discussions within a relationship</p> <p>Consent &amp; coercion</p> <p>Physical &amp; emotional abuse, sexual exploitation, violence &amp; harassment</p> <p>Victim blaming language</p> <p><b>HEALTHY SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS &amp; MENOPAUSE</b></p> <p>Overcoming barriers, (including embarrassment, myths and misconceptions) about sexual health and the use of sexual health services</p> <p>Types of STIs and their symptoms</p> <p><b>COMMITMENT &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>Commitment, marriage &amp; civil partnerships</p> <p>Diversity of family units</p> <p>Parenting roles</p> <p>Starting a family, miscarriage, surrogacy, fostering &amp; adoption</p> <p>Relationships &amp; mental health – postnatal depression, postnatal body image</p> <p><b>PORNOGRAPHY, SEX, MYTHS &amp; THE MEDIA</b></p> <p>How does porn affect relationships and expectations?</p> <p>Condom demonstration lesson</p> <p><b>RELATIONSHIP CONFLICTS</b></p> <p>Relationships &amp; mental health – relationship breakdowns, divorce &amp; separation</p>
<b>Lower Sixth</b>	<p>Creating &amp; maintaining respectful, tolerant and healthy relationships</p> <p>Preventing gender-based violence</p> <p>Online relationships &amp; dating</p> <p>Consent, coercion, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and violence, with reference to Everyone's Invited and Me Too.</p> <p>Personal safety, sexual harassment and rape culture, including use of alcohol and drugs.</p> <p>Pornography and its effects on the viewer</p> <p>Incel communities</p>



### **6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment**

RSE lessons are an integral part of our PSHE curriculum. The programme is regularly monitored and evaluated by the PSHE team to ensure impact, to improve teaching effectiveness, and to ensure that the pupil voice is heard. This takes place through a variety of methods including both structured and informal staff and pupil feedback, and whole-school annual surveys. The monitoring and assessment of RSE is designed to ensure that the important issues covered have been considered and understood by pupils with a holistic and discussion-based approach. A variety of assessment techniques will be used by individual class teachers including discussion, questioning, quizzes and surveys.

Staff are given regular support and training delivered via external agencies (with expertise in RSE), through the Head of PSHE leading termly PSHE teacher meetings, and also, when required, through the in-house weekly series of 10-Minute Forums open to all staff. These opportunities allow for a confident team of PSHE teachers who are familiar with the well-planned curriculum and offer a consistent approach.

We take great care to ensure that both lessons and resources are effective, age appropriate and engaging – always thinking about ways to develop and facilitate learning.

### **7. Equality, Inclusion and Social Justice**

We believe that RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools.

We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the RSE and PSHE curriculum. We are also committed to RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included, ensuring that it is relevant to all. This means we are committed to an LGBTQ+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the [SEND Code of Practice 2014](#) when planning for this subject. We ensure that we consider the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE, being sensitive to the cultural and ethnic diversity of pupils. Our inclusive approach to RSE will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the [Equality Act 2010](#).

*‘Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole school approach.’ (RSHE Guidance, p14)*





### **8. Safeguarding and Child Protection**

RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). RSE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse, or have experienced, abuse of any kind.

We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have undertaken statutory training around child protection and will follow the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.

### **9. Consultation, Policy Development and Review**

To adapt to the changing needs of the pupils at KCT and the wider King's community, we will be regularly updating and reviewing all aspect of RSE.

We believe that the successful teaching of RSE involves parents/carers and the school working together. We also believe that parents/carers play an important role in the RSE of their children through exploring discussions that have taken place in school at home.

This policy has been through a process of consultation with the Head, SMT, our staff and board of governors to ensure that it best serves the pupils and the King's Community as a whole. We ensure that the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents/carers, including through publishing the policy on our school website.

This policy document is freely available and open for consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents/carers, school staff, governors and any other appropriate stakeholders.

It will be reviewed on an annual basis.



### **Links to other school policies:**

- 18 Anti-Bullying Policy
- 19 Behaviour Policy
- 20 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- 44 KCT PSHE Scheme of Work

### **Useful Links and Documents relating to RSE:**

- Statutory Government Guidance on Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education  
[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- Equality Act 2010: Guidance  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>
- It Happens Education – RSE external speakers, annual visit for pupils, staff & parents  
<http://www.ithappens.education/>
- Sex Education Forum Monitoring, evaluating and assessing RSE – the basics (2018)  
<https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/monitoring%2C%20evaluating%20and%20assessing%20RSE%20-%20the%20basics.pdf>