



Shrewsbury School

## **Relationships and Sex Education Policies and Practice**

The aim of RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) at Shrewsbury School 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 also covers contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It aims to teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.

We aim for all pupils at Shrewsbury School through our effective RSE lessons, pastoral care, tutor periods and talks to 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.

Though our effective RSE lessons and talks we do not encourage early sexual experimentation but aim to teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables pupils to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE at Shrewsbury School also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

The PSD department with support from the RSE consultancy IT Happens promotes knowledge about safer sex and sexual health. It remains important to ensure that pupils are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. The small but experienced department delivers this in a non-judgemental, factual way and allows scope for pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Ground rules are set to help manage sensitive discussion and question boxes are used to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

We hope to build on the foundation of Relationships Education from primary school and from the RSE taught at Prep Schools, Secondary Schools or International Schools from which our pupils arrive in Third Form. As pupils grow up, we extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, pupils will also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. This teaching enables pupils to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.

Pupils at Shrewsbury School should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. We strive to teach pupils that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing.

The ethos of Shrewsbury School is underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. These include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth. There are many ways in which life at Shrewsbury School supports the development of these attributes, for example by providing planned opportunities

for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

Pupils will be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity will be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. We aspire to give an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships. This is integrated appropriately into the RSE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson.

It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Faith, or other perspectives, are studied in other subjects such as Religious Education.

Our aim is for pupils to be well informed about the full range of perspectives and well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Key aspects of the law relating to sex are taught including the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour are also addressed sensitively and clearly. We address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM) and teach where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, pupils are supported 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 and forced marriage) and shown strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk. Shrewsbury School strives to be a place of consistency and safety through the wider pastoral network, where pupils can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support if they have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially.

Internet safety is also addressed in PSD, talks from external agencies and in Computer Science lessons. Pupils are taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This includes how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Pupils are shown how data is generated, collected, shared and used online, for example, how personal data is captured on social media or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them.

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

It is important to note that there is **no right to withdraw** from **Relationships Education** or **Health Education** in the overall curriculum. We aim at all times to work closely with our parents and ensure that pupils receive education that will support their personal development and future wellbeing.

If parents express a wish to withdraw a child from specific **sex education sessions**, a meeting must be arranged with the Deputy Head Pastoral.

RSE is an important part of a child's education, within a broad and balanced curriculum. It is important to be aware that withdrawal may have a detrimental impact on your child. This may include any social and emotional effects of being excluded from the lessons, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

In accordance with the guidance the school will only respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.

### **Requirements on schools in law**

The Equality Act 2010 states:

The responsible body of such a school must not discriminate against a pupil:

- (a) In the way it provides education for the pupil;
- (b) In the way it affords the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service;
- (c) By not providing education for the pupil;
- (d) By not affording the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service;
- (e) By excluding the pupil from the school;
- (f) By subjecting the pupil to any other detriment.

The following characteristics are protected characteristics:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation.

### **Equal opportunities**

RSE lessons are a supportive and empowering space for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal and social relationships. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and inclusion promoted. Any bullying that relates to any of the protected characteristics will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. Procedures regarding this are outlined in our **Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies**.

### **Safeguarding and confidentiality**

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality is provided to all teachers.

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 Procedure** will be followed. See our website to access our **Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**.

Head of Pupil Wellbeing and PSD September 2021

Deputy Head Pastoral September 2021

### **Sessions deliver the content outlined in the DFE's statutory guidance:**

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/781150/Draft\\_guidance\\_Relationships\\_Education\\_Relationships\\_and\\_Sex\\_Education\\_RSE\\_and\\_Health\\_Education2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781150/Draft_guidance_Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education2.pdf)

### **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 is, including their legal status – for example, 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
- 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 raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting
- 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), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as:
- 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
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships

- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, 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 respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs
- 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 as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

## **Online and media**

Pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- 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, for example 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
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

## **Being safe**

Pupils should know:

- 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
- 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

## **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, for example 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 and menopause
- 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, efficacy 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 and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the 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

## **The Law**

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant 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
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

Head of Pupil Welfare November 2021 (to be reviewed September 2022)