



PSHE RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Policy approved by Community Committee on 15th March 2023 to be reviewed annually.

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible relationships and sex education (RSE) to all its students as part of the school's personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum very seriously. The school wants parents and students to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of students, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the sex education provision.

This policy is created with reference to the DfE Relationships and Sex Education Guidance (RSE) (February 2019). The policy is reviewed and approved by the governing body annually.

1. Policy aims

RSE is primarily delivered at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, through a comprehensive and current PSHE curriculum. PSHE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by students in our care. It is also about teaching what it is to be in a caring, stable and mutually supportive relationship with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship. RSE will outline the importance of marriage for family life and the raising of children, as well as highlighting the role of marriage and other stable relationships as building blocks for community and society. When relevant, some aspects of RSE will be delivered through other curriculum subjects, such as Biology and RS.

The school would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive RSE as an integral part of our PSHE programme we are not encouraging students to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that students may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise students' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We hope to teach students to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our students to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

2. Roles and responsibilities

School staff

It is important that all relevant school staff feel comfortable in delivering PSHE classes and in answering questions from students. If the teacher does not feel confident leading PSHE discussions, and more specifically RSE lessons, then that is likely to be reflected by the students, and their learning will be compromised. Therefore staff can request to opt out of the delivery of PSHE lessons. We have a small number of specialist staff delivering PSHE lessons. Professional development training in how to deliver PSHE education is undertaken where necessary by relevant staff; this includes sessions on setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching PSHE and RSE is so important. There are certain members of the school leadership team, such as the Deputy Headteacher and the Head of Sixth Form, who will hold more responsibility for ensuring that the school's sex education provision is relevant to our students and effective, but this is generally a responsibility for the PSHE Co-ordinator, however, the school encourages all relevant staff to voice opinions and share expertise in this area.

Governors and senior leaders will:

- Develop this school policy and review it on a yearly basis. This policy is developed in consultation with the School Council and relevant staff to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.
- Ensure that all staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues relating to PSHE and RSE and if necessary, how to deliver lessons on such issues.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to sex education.
- Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to students. This may be because they do not feel that their training has been adequate or that aspects of the curriculum conflict with their religious beliefs.
- Ensure that sex education is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our students do and meets their needs.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding PSHE and RSE to which all students are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced RSE in school.
- Communicate freely with staff, parents and the governing body to ensure that everyone understands the school policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as appropriate. We want the provision of sex education at home to be complementary to the provision the school provides, and this should be clearly communicated to parents and additional support given where necessary or requested.

All staff will:

- Take it upon themselves to ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to their line manager.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around sex education provision.

- Encourage students to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a student comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels is a safeguarding concern, they should take this concern to the DSL.
- If relevant, provide regular feedback to the Head of PSHE on their experience of teaching RSE and student response.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all students in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those students with special educational needs. If teachers need support in this area they should speak to the SENCO or the Head of Year.

Students

Students are expected to attend PSHE classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. However, students are allowed to opt out of elements of the PSHE curriculum following consultation with their parents, when they feel uncomfortable with the subject matter. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the school expects students to recognise this.

Students should support one another with issues that arise through PSHE and RSE. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Students who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the **School Behaviour Policy (available on school website)**.

We also hope that students will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, regarding any concerns they have in school related to sex education or otherwise. Conversations of this nature between staff and students will be held in confidence; however, staff must take all safeguarding concerns to the DSL immediately.

We ask students for feedback on the school's sex education provision *yearly* and expect them to take this responsibility seriously. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by senior managers and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's students. In this way, the school hopes to provide students with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

Parents

The school encourages parents to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents to create an open home environment where students can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PSHE. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed. For information on accessing school support, see section 5.

3. Implementation and curriculum

It is important that we implement our RSE policy consistently throughout the school and provide effective provision throughout the PSHE classrooms. We encourage teachers to provide classes that are specific to the needs of the students in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and

development.

Through this aspect of our curriculum, we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our students to make informed decisions regarding sex and relationships. It is important that students know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

An outline scheme of work for each year group can be found here:

[PSHE Schemes of Work - Yr7-11](#) These are subject to change due to regular updating, in line with national guidance issued.

Guest speakers

We may at certain times invite guest speakers, such as the school nurse, into school to talk on issues related to sex and relationships. It may be the case that the subject under discussion is better coming from an expert or experienced health professional who can challenge student's perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons.

Terminology

Students will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

Dealing with difficult questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the PSHE Co-ordinator

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- an anonymous question box; this will enable students to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified
- making the classroom a safe space; this means that whatever is discussed in the classroom stays in the classroom and should not be brought up at any other time. We hope this will give students the sense that they are in a safe zone to speak freely about sex and relationships.

Students with special educational needs

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of students of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to PSHE and RSE.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all students have access to the same information. These may include:

- interactive teaching methods e.g. contraceptive card game

- use of expert guest speakers
- practical activities
- using DVDs or video
- group and paired activities.

Withdrawal from RSE

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the PSHE and RSE curriculum and urges parents to read this policy. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school. It is, however, a statutory right of parents or carers to withdraw the children in their care from RSE. This excludes withdrawal from the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under science in the National Curriculum.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from RSE should contact the relevant Head of Year who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

Complaints

Parents or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the PSHE and RSE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's Complaints Policy.

Equal opportunities

PSHE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the **School Behaviour Policy (available on the school website)**.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

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

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 Policy (available on the school website)** should be followed.

If a staff member is approached by a student under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- Ensure that the student is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active.
- Encourage the student to talk to their parent or carer. Students may feel that they are more

comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible.

- Decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a member of staff is informed that a student under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures and the DSL should be informed immediately.

Students with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the SENCO and the DSL to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

Advice and treatment

Staff who are approached by students with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted disease should refer them immediately to the DSL. Providing advice on contraception and practising safe sex is a key part of the school's RSE provision. We also encourage parents to engage their child in open discussion about practising safe sex.

There is no reason for staff to expect to be made aware of a student or colleague's HIV or hepatitis status, and no person will be discriminated against because of this if there is a disclosure of this type of information.

The school's **Control of Infections Policy** covers protection for all school members against infection from blood-borne viruses.

4. Monitoring, review and evaluation

The educational and personal needs of our students develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide RSE, within a comprehensive PSHE programme, that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our students, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we review the PSHE and RSE curriculum yearly, and will inform parents of any revisions to the school policy or sex education curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our sex education provision through:

- at least yearly feedback from students
- feedback from staff
- classroom observations
- End of unit reviews

The school will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from students, staff and parents, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

5. Support

We hope that students will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff about

any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that students respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom. Students are regularly provided with information about the different ways in which they can access support both within and outside school.

Signed by

Chair of governors _____

Date: _____