

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

This Relationships and Sex Education policy applies in the Senior School, for all pupils in Years 7-13.

It is written following consultation and guidance published by the Department for Education in February and June 2019 respectively. The statutory guidance is published in the document, Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (June 2019).

The regulations in this document are made under Sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Other relevant government guidance in the matters of relationships and sex education include, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019); Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools) (May 2018); Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying) (July 2017); Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils) (January 2016); Equality Act 2010 and schools (May 2014).

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy, applying only in the Alleyn's Senior School:

- sets out the intentions behind the coverage of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE);
- Summarises the main parts of the coverage of the RSE;
- gives information about parents' right to request to withdraw their child from the lessons;
- confirms the scrutiny of the School governors;
- sets out the date of the review of the policy.

Other School policies that have relevance to this area of a pupil's education include, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Anti-bullying and Harmful Peer Relations (peer-on-peer abuse) Policy; Pupil Code of Conduct; Pupils' Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy; IT Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils Using School IT facilities; IT and E-safety Policy.

INTENTIONS OF RSE AT ALLEYN'S

At Alleyn's, we have long since covered the critical importance of pupils considering the place of relationships and sexual activity in their lives. RSE is delivered in our PSCHE programme and is consistent with the aims of that programme, which is also a major part of our aims to be a healthy school, promoting positive aspects of health in all areas of life for its pupils. Among those aims, the most relevant to RSE are (taken from aims published in the safeguarding policy):

- developing a School ethos and environment which encourages safe and healthy lifestyle for pupils;
- covering relevant issues through Relationships and Sex Education (SS) delivered through the PSCHE programme, and supported in assemblies or other pastoral forums;
- promoting an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon lifelong health and well-being both as an individual and as part of wider modern British society.

All pupils at Alleyn's need knowledge to help inform decisions that they make as young people while at the School and as growing adults when they leave us. In RSE the pupils are able to reflect on the central importance of healthy management of relationships and their own assessment of safety and risk in sexual behaviour.

Lessons in RSE challenge pupils to make independent choices, informed by their own knowledge and reflection, so that they can feel empowered to feel in control of their behaviour. Pupils are given the chance to see how personal values can be affirmed through the exercising of choice, and that at the heart of any behavioural decisions lies the importance of self-respect and respect for the wishes of others.

RSE will be provided in such a way as to encourage all the pupils to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life, while also having regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the named protected characteristics. LGBT content is fully integrated into the School's programme, as required by the statutory guidance, and not as a standalone unit or lesson.

Pupils are given evidence-based materials in the lessons, and these also inform them of the legal context of behaviour in relationships and sexual matters.

Lessons are delivered through a mix of teacher-led material and outside agencies, with specific expertise in RSE, coming in to deliver presentations. The staff involved in the delivery of topics encourage (at appropriate times) pupil-led discussion and questioning, to foster an atmosphere of engagement, respect and awareness of the importance of the matters under discussion.

By the end of their time at Alleyn's a pupil should know about the following issues, the headlines of which appear in the guidance document:

- Families
- Respectful relationships including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- The law

Lessons are also constructed to deal with physical health and mental wellbeing, enabling the encouragement of self-regulation and adopting positive choices for a healthy, lifestyle with good mental health. The issue of menstruation is covered at an age appropriate stage in the curriculum.

Materials are checked by medical staff (the nurses) who also form part of the Pastoral Care Committee and the Safeguarding Committee, guiding good practice in these matters from a pupil safeguarding perspective.

The governors have oversight of the policy, and the Senior Deputy Head reports to the board and works closely with the Link Governor for Safeguarding, raising issues about RSE when appropriate.

THE PARENTS' RIGHT TO REQUEST TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILD FROM RSE

Parents have a right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the RSE curriculum.

Parents do not have the right to request withdrawal of a child from some elements of the statutory national curriculum which deal with the biological aspects of human development and reproduction.

The statutory guidance advises that before such a parental request is granted, that the School (normally the Senior Deputy Head) would be in conversation with the parents and, as appropriate with the child, to ensure full understanding of the child's wishes and to clarify the nature and

purpose of the curriculum. A record will be kept of the process by which any request is made and granted (or not). At these meetings, the dangers of the child missing out on education being received by peers and the vulnerability of the child to missing out on the benefits of RSE will be discussed. The School will point out possible detrimental consequences of potential social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing her/his peers' version of what was covered in classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

The statutory guidance (paragraph 47) states that "Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the 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 should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms."

This process is applied equally to any pupils of ours with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when the School will take into consideration a particular pupil's specific needs, and take that into account when coming to a decision.

If a child is withdrawn from RSE, then the School has a duty to ensure the pupil "receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal".