



Independent and Co-educational School

**Relationship and Sex and Health Education Policy
(SJ410)**

Registered Charity No: 1086829

Date of Issue: September 2023

Date of review: August 2024

Owner: Director of Studies / Writer: Head of PSHE

DEAN CLOSE ST JOHNS SCHOOL

Relationship and Sex and Health Education Policy

Aims

- To provide a Christian moral framework as the context for future choices
- To inform and prepare pupils for adult life and relationships
- To provide a safe and secure environment within which personal matters relating to their own bodies, and development into young adults, can be discussed openly and honestly
- To support the work in Science, by presenting clearly the biological facts about reproduction
- To encourage pupils' sensitivity to the needs and situations of others
- To encourage pupils to understand personal responsibility in all matters of relationships – mental and physical

Introduction

This policy covers Dean Close St. John's whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships, and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being. In our school, we believe that there is a need to teach age and developmentally appropriate sex education as part of our Relationships Education.

Dean Close St. John's believes that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led Relationships Education. We believe that through providing high quality Relationships Education, we are upholding the ethos and values of this school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.

Aims and Objectives

Our school's aims and objectives for our pupils are:

The objective of a St John's education is to provide for children aged 3 to 13 years, both day and boarding, which will motivate, challenge, encourage and inspire them.

- Every pupil is stretched with A WEALTH OF OPPORTUNITIES, both inside and outside the classroom.

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- We aim to INSPIRE children to reach their full academic, social and emotional potential in a safe, caring and supportive setting.
- We emphasise the importance of MANNERS, RESPECT and SELF-DISCIPLINE while having HIGH EXPECTATIONS of all our children.
- We are an inclusive school with CHRISTIAN VALUES.

This policy was produced in consultation with our staff, board of trustees, pupils and parents. We will ensure the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents.

The information below complies with our statutory obligations to deliver Relationships Education under sections 34 & 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It will have due regard for the statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance and other relevant guidance.

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 programme continues to meet the needs of our pupils.

The policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies:

- PSHE Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour Management policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Online Safety Policy

Equality, Inclusion and Social Justice

We believe that Relationships Education is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our Relationships Education is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes, sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum.

We are also committed to a Relationships Education that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBT+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching Relationships Education. An inclusive Relationships Education at Dean Close St. John's will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

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Definition of Relationship Education

We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life.

At Dean Close St. John's, in order to cover the curriculum content in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our pupils to build positive and respectful relationships on and offline. We seek to ensure that it gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- realise their health, wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal identity and the identities of others
- explore a range of family structures, including LGBT+ families and other family structures
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

Definition of Sex Education

We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health.

We take the approach that relationships and sex education are best approached in an integrated way. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.

Many aspects of sex education are complimented by our curriculum for science curriculum where children learn about the main external body parts and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. In the statutory Health Education curriculum children learn about puberty and menstruation.

We deliver content on menstruation from year 6 in order that girls can learn about menstruation in advance of them starting their first period.

Our sex education programme builds upon the content already delivered through the Science and Health Education curriculum and is the foundation for helping children to stay safe and understand more about their sexual health and wellbeing. We recognise that some parents may be uncomfortable with their children receiving sex education in prep school. However, in our experience, children will naturally ask questions about sex and their bodies, and be curious about

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where they come from. We believe that it is safer and better for children to receive age appropriate and medically accurate information from trained teachers rather than learn inaccurate and harmful information through peers or online.

We believe that sex education should allow children a safe space to ask the questions that they may have without shame or judgement. Evidence states that a graduated, age and developmentally appropriate curriculum is the best way of preventing the topic of sex, reproduction and private body parts becoming taboo or embarrassing.

Subject Content

The RSHE curriculum is developed in conjunction with the PSHE Association and covers the following at different times of the year. We will endeavour to let parents/carer know in advance when the more sensitive topics are being covered.

Year 1 Relationship Education

- Families and friendships
- Safe relationships
- Respecting ourselves and others

Year 2 Relationship Education

- Making friends
- Working cooperatively and sharing opinions
- managing secrets
- resisting pressure
- recognizing hurtful behaviour

Year 3 Relationships Education

- Teamwork
- Understanding emotions
- Showing empathy
- Resolving conflict
- Trusted people and feeling safe

Year 4 Relationship Education

- How to communicate with others
- 'What makes a good friend?'
- Teamwork
- Anti-bullying
- Different types of relationships
- Characteristics of healthy family relationships

Year 5 Relationships Education

- Identifying emotions
- How to make good friends

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- Anti-bullying
- Mutual respect
- Stereotypes and discrimination
- Privacy and personal boundaries
- Acceptable and unacceptable contact

Year 6 Relationships Education

- Friendship and making new friends
- Identifying emotions and developing strategies to avoid conflict
- Staying safe online
- Online-only friendships
- Respecting boundaries
- Developing morals
- Loss and bereavement

Year 7 Relationships Education

- Important characteristics of a friendship
- Anti-bullying
- Sexting and relationships online
- Prejudice in Society
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Challenging Homophobic language
- Peer pressure
- Puberty

Year 8 Relationships Education

- Online relationships
- Healthy Body Image
- Healthy Relationships
- Challenging Discrimination including LGBTQ+
- Sexualised behaviour
- Gender identity and gender-based bullying
- Consent

**For the academic year 2023-24 Year 7 and 8 will be taught together covering topics from both the Year 7 and the Year 8 list above.*

Evaluation of our scheme of work is crucial to ensure that we can continue to improve provision and teaching effectiveness. We will take feedback from teacher and pupils to ensure the content is reviewed and updated regularly.

Answering Pupils Questions

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Relationships Education explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to explore natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others.

As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. We recognise that some pupil questions may go beyond the statutory Relationships Education curriculum and could include questions about sex and sexuality related topics that are covered in our sex education curriculum. In such cases, the teacher may choose to delay answering the question in front of the whole class until the appropriate sex education lesson. Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way and take into account whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons.

We believe that an open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older students. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in our Relationships Education curriculum. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm and abuse when they can discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

Working with Parents and Carers

We believe that the successful teaching of Relationships Education involves parents/carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/carers can play an important role in the Relationships Education of their children through further discussions at home that have taken place in school. Our Relationships Education policy has been developed through consultation with parents/carers.

We will share examples of some of the key resources we use with parents/carers to reassure them of the content and to enable them to continue the conversations started in class at home. We will also give parents the opportunity to discuss topics with our Relationship Education further either via email or face-to face.

Parent's Right to Withdraw

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of Relationships and Sex Education. All requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headmaster (NT). The Headmaster and Head of PSHE will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education.

Safeguarding

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Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff are trained annually on how to respond to student disclosures. Teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and in his/her absence their deputy. Any external agencies are informed of the school's safeguarding policy prior to interaction with students.

The sex education programme in DCSJS is incorporated within the PSHE programme and is part of the Science Curriculum. The sessions are scheduled to take place during the Trinity term in the Science curriculum. The contents of the sessions are differentiated for different year groups. Discussions about relationships and marriage are set within a Christian framework and perspective. In all cases the staff seek to respond sensitively to the questions and concerns raised, being well aware that home situations may be complicated.

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