**HOLYWELL CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL**

# Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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| Author | P Gough |
| Responsibility | All staff and the governing body |
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| Distribution | All staff and governors.<br>Open access to parents via school website and school office |

## 1. Rationale and Ethos

"Live life in all its fullness" (John 10:10)

At Holywell, our vision is that everyone in our community chooses to "**Live Life in all its Fullness**" (John 10:10).

Inspired by the teaching of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, we choose …
to live our values,
being the best we can be
in community.

i. As a Church of England School, we believe that the scriptures provide guidance and principles for humans on how to behave to fulfil themselves in relationships. Our relationships at Holywell and our approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are underpinned by the following Bible verses:
"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love." *Ephesians 4:2*
"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." *John 15:12*

ii. We believe RSE is important for students and our school because it is vital in helping students learn to live confident, healthy and independent lives. It will play an important role in helping students understand and cope with the changes to their body, emotions and social experiences during their time at secondary school and will prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Students should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as building blocks of families, communities and society. Students should be taught about sex, sexuality and sexual health in the wider context of respectful, loving and caring relationships.

iii. We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by teaching in mixed ability classes, ensuring that all resources are accessible and appropriate, encouraging parents to view the Schemes of Work and raise any concerns for their child with us, and using inclusive language in the classroom. We recognise that some students will be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than their peers and may be confused about what is acceptable behaviour. The form teacher, PSHE coordinator, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO), Welfare Officer and Designated Safeguarding Person should collaborate where appropriate to support such vulnerable students so that they are able to protect themselves and learn acceptable behaviours. If appropriate, the SEND team ensures that a Teaching Assistant is present with a SEND student in RSE lessons and will provide follow up sessions to allow students more time and opportunities to digest the information from the lesson and raise any queries.

iv. We will integrate LGBTQ+ content into the RSE curriculum – this content will be taught as part of the overall curriculum, rather than a standalone topic or lesson. LGBTQ+ content will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate and factual way that allows students to explore gender identity and the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships. The curriculum will be designed to focus on students of all gender identities and expressions and activities will be planned to ensure all are actively involved. We will also ensure that the teaching of sensitive topics, e.g. the body, is done in a way that is appropriate and sensitive to the various needs of the school community, e.g. cultural background. We ensure RSE fosters gender equality and LGBT+ equality by:

- never making assumptions about intimate relationships,
- all classes are mixed in terms of abilities and disabilities, experiences, backgrounds, gender and sexual identities,
- use of inclusive language,
- inclusion of LGBT, non-binary people in case studies and scenarios.

Although there will be no direct promotion of sexual orientation, staff will deal honestly and sensitively with any examples raised. Any form of bullying, e.g. homophobic abuse, linked with LGBT will be dealt with following procedures in the Anti-Bullying policy.

## 2. Definitions

i. What is RSE?

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is the start of lifelong learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It is about understanding the importance of marriage and stable relationships for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or activity. Some aspects are taught in Science and others are taught as part of Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education.

ii. What is high quality RSE provision?

High quality Relationships and Sex Education starts early and is relevant to students at each stage in their development and maturity. It consists of 3 main elements to develop: knowledge and understanding, attitudes and values, and personal and social skills. It is taught by trained and confident people using active learning methods supported by a well-planned, assessed and evaluated curriculum, which has been developed and reviewed by key stakeholders (students, parents, teaching staff, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and governors). Medically and factually correct knowledge is shared and students are made aware of their legal rights and responsibilities as well as external resources available to them. In a safe and inclusive learning environment, students are able to understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships

while staff are able to promote healthy relationships and equality. Student safety is paramount meaning confidentiality issues are clearly explained, safeguarding measures are continually in place and students develop the skills to know how to recognise and respond to issues such as consent, on and offline safety, violence and exploitation.

Successful and high quality RSE contributes to a positive ethos and environment for learning; safeguarding students while promoting wellbeing; a better understanding of diversity and inclusion meaning a reduction in prejudice, bullying and violence and reducing early sexual activity, exploitation and abuse. Students will be able to enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing support and services should they need help and advice.

**3. Aims**

The intended outcomes of our RSE are to:

i. support the development in our students of
   a) Attitudes and Values:
      - learning the importance of values (e.g. love, respect and care), individual conscience and moral conscience
      - learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
      - exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
      - developing critical thinking skills as part of decision-making
   b) Personal and social skills:
      - manage emotions and relationships
      - developing self-respect and empathy for others
      - learning to make choices with an understanding of difference and absence of prejudice
      - the ability to take responsibility for, and accept the consequences of, their own actions
      - managing conflict
      - recognising and avoiding exploitation and abuse
   c) Knowledge and understanding
      - an understanding of physical development at appropriate stages
      - understanding sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
      - types of contraception and range of advice and support services available
      - learning the reasons for and benefits of delaying sexual activity
      - the knowledge to reduce the risks to their own health and the health of others.

ii. work with parents, carers, families who are the primary educators of our children in this area of their lives
iii. provide parents, carers and families with the opportunity to view the content of their child's RSE programme for the year, via the school website
iv. ensure that parents, carers and families are clearly informed that whilst Relationships Education is now a statutory requirement, parents are able to withdraw their child from sex education (other than the sex education which sits in the National Curriculum as part of the Science curriculum)
v. deliver the full national programme as appropriate in each of our four year groups
vi. provide support and initial counselling for students whose response to these programmes raises a particular need
vii. ensure that staff engaged in delivering these programmes are reminded of the school's Safeguarding Policy and practice
viii. make appropriate use of external health professionals.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

i. The RSE programme will be led by the PSHE Co-ordinator and supported by Heads of Year, Deputy Heads (Curriculum and Safeguarding), SENDCO, Welfare officer and Governors through their Ethos committee.
ii. RSE forms part of the PSHE curriculum in every year group – full details are in the curriculum long-term plans for PSHE and Science.
iii. RSE will be taught by specialist teachers in mixed ability groups as part of the PSHE curriculum and by Science teachers in its contribution of RSE delivery. On some occasions, students may be organised in single sex groups.
iv. The RSE programme will be monitored and evaluated by the PSHE coordinator and the Headteacher. They will include a range of sources of information including student questionnaires, teacher assessments, student self-assessment and teacher surveys.
v. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSE and health education curriculum; for promoting knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff; for being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a child that have arisen through the teaching of RSE and health education.
vi. A variety of teaching approaches will be used to give students relevant information to enable moral issues to be explored through discussion and to acquire appropriate skills. Please see Sections 5 & 6 for outlines of the Schemes of Work and the range of teaching strategies used. Full schemes of work are available on request from the school.
vii. An annual report will be made to the Governors. The full policy will be made available to all parents on request and will be available on the school website.
viii. A nominated Governor will have a link role between the school and the governing body.

## 5. Legislation (Statutory regulations and guidance)

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all students receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools. We follow this guidance, ensuring that all students have access to the programme.

<u>Equality and accessibility</u>
At Holywell, we comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and we ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against students because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race

- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

We consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of our students and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for students with the above protected characteristics.

We understand that students with SEND are entitled to learn about RSE and health education, and the curriculum will be designed to be inclusive of all students.

We are aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND – teachers will understand that they may need to liaise with the SENDCO and be more explicit and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to students with SEND.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of students at different developmental stages, we will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

We will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on students based on their gender or any other characteristic.

We will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and tackled promptly.

We will make clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy and Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

## 6. Curriculum Design

In the first RSE lessons, teachers will ensure that each class has developed their own ground rules for discussion and participation in order to create a safe, caring learning environment. The teacher will also introduce the "Ask-It Basket" as a means for students to ask confidential questions. Confidentiality and safeguarding procedures will be made clear so that students know they can raise issues with staff but know that if any safety concerns arrive these will be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Person. The bullet points below outline the topics covered during the RSE unit. Please note that although some topics do not appear to link directly with RSE they are included because they fall within the "relationships" element e.g. the possibility of encountering drugs through friendship groups.

### Year 6

Autumn Term – Healthy Relationships

- Establishing Community Time and Restorative Practices
- Identifying Risks and Keeping Safe Online
- Diversity
- Stereotypes
- Relationship Skills and Challenges
- Anti-bullying

- Living in the Wider World – Goal Setting, Rules and Democracy
- Rules and Laws
- Democracy
- S.M.A.R.T Target Setting

Spring Term – Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing (RHE)

- Physical and Emotional Changes During Puberty
- Families
- Sleep Hygiene
- Caring for Mental Health
- Dental Health
- Identifying Legal and Illegal Drugs
- Understanding the Risks of Drugs

**Year 7**

Autumn Term – Relationships – Managing Emotions and Keeping safe

- Getting to Know and Appreciate Peers
- Managing Feelings
- Parts of the Brain and Learning
- Peer Pressure - Strategies for Resisting Unhelpful Peer Influence
- Anti-Bullying
- Discrimination
- Recognising Early-Warning Signs
- Managing Risk
- Making Decisions

Spring Term – Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Recap on Main Physical Aspects of Puberty.
- Personal Hygiene
- Emotional Aspects of Puberty
- Keeping Healthy – Diet, Fitness and Good Sleep Routines.
- Screen Time
- Alcohol and Tobacco– Dangers, Effects and the Law
- Respectful Relationships

**Year 8**

Autumn Term - Belonging and Community and Human Rights

- Identity and Community
- Bias and Stereotypes
- Discrimination and Protected Characteristics
- Values and Constructive Disagreement
- Diverse and Supportive Communities
- Human Rights
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Anti-bullying
- Prejudice and discrimination

- Asylum Seekers

Spring Term - Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Healthy Relationships
- Body Image and the Media
- Sex and the Law
- Contraception
- Dangers of Illegal Drugs

**Year 9**

Autumn Term - Mental Health and Wellbeing, Careers and Future Choices

- Managing Strong Emotions, Disappointments and Distractions
- Healthy and Unhealthy Coping Strategies
- Stress Resilience
- Body Modifications
- Exploring Career Interests
- Work Patterns and Places
- Managing Pressure and Seeking Support
- Preparing for KS4 Options
- Showcasing Personal Strengths
- Managing Online Presence

Spring Term - Drug education, Intimate sexual relationships

- Vaping
- Exploring attitudes to drug use
- The law and managing risk
- Managing influence
- Alcohol and Cannabis
- Consent
- Relationship values
- Contraception
- Sexual health
- Managing relationship endings

**7. Safe and effective practice**

i. The processes outlined below have been designed to ensure a safe learning environment for staff and students.

ii. Teacher and students will agree ground rules for discussion within each form class before the teaching of RSE. The teacher should ensure that the following points form part of the ground rules:
    - No-one (teacher or student) will have to answer a personal question
    - No-one will be forced to take part in a discussion
    - Only the correct names for body parts will be used
    - Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way

iii. Distancing techniques such as role-play, case studies, invented characters etc. will be used to depersonalise all discussions. This is to avoid embarrassment of staff and to protect student's privacy. This technique also allows students to discuss sensitive issues and develop their decision-making skills in a safe environment.

iv. Students will be encouraged to ask questions. The following guidelines are designed to support teachers in managing questions:
- Teachers must guide students as to whether a question is appropriate in a whole class setting or would be better discussed separately.
- An “Ask-it basket” will ensure that students are able to ask questions anonymously by writing down the question on a piece of paper.
- Teachers can use their judgement to decide if, how and when questions should be answered. For example, if a question is too personal, then students must be reminded of ground rules. Another example would be that the teacher would like to seek further advice from colleagues regarding the appropriateness or how to answer a question so will discuss with students later. If a teacher feels uncomfortable answering a question, then they should discuss this with the PSHE coordinator or another appropriate colleague to seek support.
- If a question is too explicit, is not age appropriate or raises concerns then the teacher should acknowledge and promise to attend to it later. This allows students to feel respected but protects other students from inappropriate content. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must ensure they follow up on this question.
- If a teacher is concerned by a student’s question or comment then discuss with the PSHE coordinator and refer to the child protection procedures.

v. All staff teaching RSE will be supported primarily by the PSHE coordinator but also by SENDCo, SLT, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Wellbeing Coordinator.

## 8. Safeguarding

i. Staff 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. Should this situation arise staff will follow the protocols set out in the Safeguarding Policy. Staff will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Leads and in their absence the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher.

ii. Visitors and external agencies which support the delivery or RSE will be required to ensure that they are never left unaccompanied with students and are made aware of the Safeguarding and Confidentiality procedures.

iii. Outside of the teaching situation, health professionals, such as school nurses can give students one-to-one advice or information on a health-related matter. Should any concerns for a student be raised to an external health professional, the school’s Safeguarding policy and procedures will apply.

## 9. Engaging stakeholders

i. Parents/carers will be informed about the policy in the form of a written letter. The policy will be available at the parent/carer’s request via the school office and/or the PSHE coordinator.

ii. As part of our whole school approach to RSE, parents/carers will be invited to view the materials and resources used.

iii. We will notify parent/carers when RSE will be taught by letter, which will also include details of how to obtain the RSE policy and where to view the teaching resources.
   a. RSE is compulsory from September 2020 (DfE guidance on good practice is to start this as soon as possible: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education).
   b. Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.
   c. Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programmes.
   d. Requests to withdraw a child from sex education should be made in writing to the headteacher.
   e. Before granting a withdrawal request, the headteacher will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the child, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.
   f. The headteacher will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any

detrimental effects that withdrawal might have.

g. All discussions with parents will be documented. These records will be kept securely in the school office in line with the school's Records Management Policy.
h. Following discussions with parents, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive RSE rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with RSE.
i. For requests concerning the withdrawal of a student with SEND, the headteacher may take the students' specific needs into account when making their decision.

iv. Governors will be informed of the RSE policy and curriculum through the Ethos Committee and Full Governing Body meetings.
v. Staff will be given opportunities to review and contribute to the RSE policy and Schemes of Work through staff meetings and briefings.
vi. Student voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of students. An appropriate forum would be through use of the "Ask-it basket" to ensure student's queries are dealt with in a timely manner, but also through an end of term reflection in their PSHE booklets.

**10. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation**

i. Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through feedback to the PSHE coordinator.
ii. Students will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons and at the end of the topic.
iii. Student voice will be used to amend and adapt planned learning activities. This could take place at the end of the topic, or form teachers may include new planned activities in response to student queries in the "Ask-it basket", but must ensure that the PSHE coordinator has seen and approved any new resources to check that they are appropriate.

**11. Review**

The Ethos and Pastoral Committee of the Board of Governors will monitor and review the implementation of this policy and make recommendations to the Full Board regarding any further amendments.

**Cross-reference this policy with the following policies**

- Safeguarding
- Equality
- Curriculum
- Complaints
- PSHE policy

## APPENDIX 1

The following issues may occur as part of RSE. Staff, parents and students need to understand the school's procedure.

**a) Confidentiality and Advice**

Students will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidential and made to understand that if certain disclosures are made certain actions will ensue. At the same time, students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

All adult employees of the school will invoke the school's Safeguarding procedures where a student makes a disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse or any sexual health concern. Professional information and guidance will be sought from a health professional where needed.

The school will always encourage students to talk first with their parents regarding any personal concerns in this area. Students should be asked whether they can tell their parent(s) and whether they want help in doing so. (Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator will support if needed.) Where the disclosure raises concern, the Holywell employee must report these to the designated teacher for Safeguarding.

**b) Family Life**

The value of family life is an important aspect, which will be approached largely through a consideration of the equalities and relationships between the group of people, with an emphasis on respect, caring and support.

**c) Facts**

As part of the Sex and Relationships Education programme, issues of contraception, sexuality and abortion will be addressed. Facts are presented in an objective and balanced way with students encouraged considering their attitudes and values. They will be made aware of the difference between fact, opinion and religious belief.

**d) Language**

All staff will use the correct language for all body parts as this is deemed as good practice. Staff will also openly teach what 'slang' words mean and that some are offensive. Staff will also avoid the use of 'slang' terms in their teaching.

**e) Complaints procedure**

Any complaints about the Sex and Relationships Education curriculum should be made to the Headteacher, who will report to the Governors with the existing complaints policy.

**f) Technology and RSE**

(i) Staff will follow the existing safeguarding procedures should they be made aware of any issues relating to student use of technology (e.g. smart phones, social media) relating to RSE.

(ii) Students will be taught about laws relating to sex, consent and managing inappropriate material and encouraged to report concerns to a trusted adult.