



# St Martins School Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Policy Date:	April 2024
Next Review Date:	April 2027 - or sooner should updates be required
Policy Owner:	Senior Leadership Team and PSHE Lead

## Contents

1. Aims
  2. Statutory requirements
  3. Policy development
  4. Definition
  5. Curriculum
  6. Delivery of RSE
  7. Roles and responsibilities
  8. Parents' right to withdraw
  9. Training
- 

### Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:  
Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place  
Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene  
Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy  
Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships  
Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

### Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy we must provide RSE to all students as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued in June 2019 by the Secretary of State to amplify the requirements outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We comply with the relevant provisions of the [Equality Act 2010](#) under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics. We have referred to the DfE guidance, Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2018) and the 2015 SEND Code of Practice.

At St Martins School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

### Policy development

- Review – Headteacher and RSE lead in school reviewed all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation
- Parent consultation
- Student consultation
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with academy council and ratified.

## **Definition**

- RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.
- RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.
- Relationships education is combined with sex education, but only the relationships part is compulsory.

## **Relationships education is about:**

- Understanding what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like
- Being safe online
- What makes good friendships and working relationships

It includes sensitive topics like gender identity and sexual orientation, as well as sexual grooming, domestic abuse and forced marriage.

This is compulsory because the government believes all children are at risk of harm if they're not properly educated on how to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are harmful.

Health education is also compulsory and aims to help teenagers make good decisions about their own health and well-being.

It includes science-based information about adolescence and is designed to teach students about changes to their bodies, such as puberty and menstruation. Other topics include:

- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Mental well-being

The sex education component is about:

- Intimate and sexual relationships
- Sexual health

## **Curriculum**

RSE is accessible for all students. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised is the starting point to ensure accessibility. We are mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

We are aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. RSE can also be a particularly important subject for some students; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. These factors are taken into consideration in the design and teaching of RSE at St Martins School.

As a special school there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of students at different developmental stages. We ensure that teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

### **Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects of moral debate are included in religious education (RE). Online safety is taught in ICT.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

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

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

"Students should be able to understand the world in which they are growing up, which means understanding that some people are LGBT, that this should be respected in British society, and that the law affords them and their relationships recognition and protections" (DfE, 2019).

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Academy Council**

The academy council approved the RSE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 8).

### **Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress

- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non- science] components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher. All teachers at St Martins School are teachers of RSE.

### **Students**

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

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

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. A withdrawal form can be found here on our website -

<https://www.stmartinsschoolderby.co.uk/teaching-and-learning/pshe>.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record.

The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

### **Training**

Staff can feedback on any CPD requirements at staff meetings, briefings and performance management meetings. Staff training on the delivery of RSE is ongoing: as part of PSHE assigned whole school staff meetings resulting from individual staff performance management reviews and Science teacher CPD.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Headteacher through:

- Scrutiny of PSHE work
- Learning walks
- Where appropriate at the Annual EHCP Reviews
- Where appropriate on the Evidence for Learning app

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers. This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Academy Council.