St David's College

— Est. 1965 —

RELATIONSHIPS & SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY

Relationships & Sexuality Education

Date	Review Date	Monitoring	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
1/09/26	1/09/27	Annually to Ed Com	Gabriella Murphy	Keith Sinclair

This policy is a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Curriculum for Wales: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Code 2022 ▪ Education Act 1996 ▪ Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Independent School Standards (Wales) 2024

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- A review of healthy relationships education (Estyn, 2017)
- Relationships and Sexuality Education in Schools (Welsh Government, 2019)
- Challenging bullying – Rights, Respect, Equality: Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools (Welsh Government, November 2019)

The Curriculum for Wales – Relationships and Sexuality Education Code (2022) states that:

'The Welsh Government committed to covering the following themes in RSE: relationships; rights and equity; sex, gender and sexuality; bodies and body image; sexual health and wellbeing; and violence, safety and support... Across the learning strands, curriculum content in RSE must be inclusive and reflect diversity. It must include learning that develops learners' awareness and understanding of different identities, views and values and a diversity of relationships, gender and sexuality, including LGBTQ+ lives.' p.3

We believe that schools play a central role in having a positive and sustained impact on children and young people's sexual health and well-being. We believe that all learners should have high-quality relationships and sexuality education (RSE) as part of their ongoing GSE (PSHE) weekly lessons. In order to support this vision, RSE is part of the GSE curriculum. There is currently a weekly GSE slot within the timetable up to, and including, Year 11. Sixth Form also receive PSHE, including RSE, guidance within their assembly programme.

Through RSE, we educate children about sexual issues in the context of morality, consent and individual responsibility. We believe that schools play an important role in having a positive and sustained impact on children and young people's sexual health, relationships and well-being. All learners need to build up their confidence, awareness and self-esteem, which will in turn assist them in managing and negotiating their personal relationships.

Under no circumstance do we use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation or gender identification. We are committed to providing RSE that is objective, critical, and pluralistic as to its content and manner of teaching. The classroom provides a safe space within which pupils can ask questions, anonymously or not, with specific ground rules in place for all. This allows for pupil-led content that seeks to serve their needs within an age-appropriate curriculum. All material used within the curriculum is from accredited organisations, that is age-appropriate and designed to fit the students' needs as well as fulfil the Wales RSE Code.

We aim to work closely with parents, carers and governors to create an ethos that will ensure all pupils receive appropriate, accurate and honest answers to their questions about RSE. Sessions during the Autumn term, which are in person and online, allow for parents, carers and governors to learn about the RSE curriculum for Years 5-6, Years 7-9 or Years 10-11, and the approach taken, as well as meet the GSE Lead responsible for the RSE component of the GSE curriculum.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that are connected with this policy.

Introduction

St David's College regards Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE) as an intrinsic element in helping students to be equipped and empowered to form lifelong sensible, mature, enjoyable, balanced judgements based on knowledge and understanding. RSE addresses physical, moral and emotional development, but also encompasses associated areas: personal relationships, sexuality and sexual health, and consent, both physical and emotional.

RSE will be taught as part of St David's College's Global Social Education (GSE) programme across all Key Stages in such a manner as to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. It will reflect the aims and values of the school, notably to continue each student's personal and social development. It will also encourage emotional stability and fulfilment and acknowledge the value of stable healthy relationships, including marriage as an important relationship choice.

RSE will be taught in an objective and balanced manner by staff who have received training in this area. It will link with other areas of GSE such as peer pressure, the Law, risk-taking and personal responsibility, and will be supported by a variety of external agencies.

PURPOSES

The RSE Programme at St David's College aims to prepare students for a full and healthy life in which they can:

1. develop positive values within a moral framework to help guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour, based on tolerance and an understanding of difference
2. understand human sexuality and be aware and positive of their own sexuality
3. understand the meaning and importance of consent, both for themselves and for others
4. understand the arguments for and benefits of delaying sexual activity in accordance with the legal age of consent, of minimising the number of sexual partners and of having protected sex
5. understand that they have the choice to delay sexual activity or to enjoy intimacy without sexual intercourse
6. understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and other personal relationships
7. have the confidence and self-esteem to value and respect themselves and others
8. understand the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships and relationships
9. have the skills to judge what kind of relationships they want and ensure all relationships are healthy
10. communicate effectively
11. have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and others from infection or unwanted pregnancy including contraceptive choices
12. avoid being exploited or exploiting others and respect individual conscience
13. avoid being pressured into non-consensual sex in all forms, including pressure to have unprotected sex
14. understand their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including the online risks and what to do and where to get support in relation to issues online
15. access confidential sexual health advice, support and if necessary, treatment
16. know how the Law applies to sexual relationships and behaviour.
17. understand the impact of pornography and the online world on relationships, behaviour, views and sexual wellbeing
18. understand the impact of misogyny and misogynistic behaviour on girls and women, and how this impacts equality in our society and affects outcomes for boys and men as well.

GUIDELINES

1. RSE sits within GSE and forms part of GSE's taught content in each year group. The GSE Lead manages the GSE programme in consultation with the Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Head (Academic), and Assistant Head (Pastoral).

2. The RSE content is set within the context of broad and interlinked learning strands, namely:

- relationships and identity
- sexual health and well-being
- empowerment, safety and respect.

3. Aspects of RSE occur within the Science curriculum across the Key Stages, as well as the Religious Education curriculum in Key Stage 3, and they support the RSE taught within GSE.

4. As stated in the Curriculum for Wales RSE Code (p.4): “The learning for RSE refers to both what is taught expressly and what is embedded throughout the curriculum and in the school environment through the whole school approach.” As such, departments/faculties are audited for their contribution to RSE, and staff training is arranged as appropriate.

5. Teaching about physical aspects of RSE will be set within a moral framework, stressing the responsibility of everyone in sexual matters and encouraging students to consider self-esteem, dignity, respect for themselves and others, understanding of the needs and views of others, fidelity, physical dangers and religious beliefs.

6. Only visual aids, films, videos and textbooks approved by health and education professionals will be used in RSE. All materials, videos and other resources will be appropriate to the students and carefully chosen. Parents/guardians may view them on request.

7. St David’s College considers RSE to be an entitlement for all children, and an important part of a child’s overall education.

8. The Governors are committed to the aim that, as far as possible, all students understand that each individual is unique, and enjoy commonality of experience. All students at St David’s College have equal access to the RSE curriculum. In liaison with specialists, the GSE Lead will ensure that the RSE programme recognises individual differences including race, religious beliefs, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, or physical abilities.

9. The views of teachers, parents, Governors and students concerning RSE will be sought at appropriate forums in particular, Staff meetings and inset days, Governors’ committee meetings, Parents’ meetings and Student Council meetings.

10. Evaluation and monitoring of the RSE programme will occur during meetings with the Assistant Head (Academic), as well as having a Link Governor for RSE. As content of lessons can at times be driven by pastoral issues arising within the student body, liaison with the Academic Head (Pastoral) is also vital.

11. Overall responsibility for the quality of provision will rest with the GSE Lead, Assistant Head (Academic) and Deputy Headteacher.

12. Sensitive issues will be approached in such a way as to respect diverse cultural and religious views within the school, including topics such as contraception, abortion, sexuality, gender identity and female genital mutilation (FGM) and other illegal practices that may be legal outside the UK. Staff will operate within the school's Confidentiality guidelines and refer any queries to the GSE Lead.

13. Opportunities for single-sex RSE lessons will be made available if it is deemed appropriate.

14. Over the course of their RSE at St David's College, at appropriate stages, all students will cover the following:

    - Personal hygiene, physical changes at puberty; menstruation and masturbation.
    - LGBT+ matters, including sexual orientation and gender identity
    - Human reproduction and fertility - factually and with the correct vocabulary.
    - Fertilisation - natural and assisted - foetal development and childbirth.
    - Family planning and methods of contraception.
    - Sexual relationships and sexual health, including consent and the age for consent.
    - Sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV and AIDS, and where to find advice, testing and support.
    - Abortion; the Law, reproductive rights and the arguments on both sides,
    - The risks of unprotected sexual intercourse and sexual behaviour when intoxicated.
    - The value of healthy, consensual, loving and stable relationships; basic parenting skills.
    - The Law relating to sexual activity including rape, sexual assault and harassment, including the available support.
    - Communication, assertiveness and management of situations involving sexual activity.
    - Staying safe online, including but not restricted to, the impact of pornography, misogynistic content, dangers of grooming and sextortion,
    - Dealing with the emotions involved in relationships, sexual or otherwise.
    - Harmful and illegal cultural and social practices, such as FGM and breast flattening/ironing, and how to report these to the police.
    - Signposting on each subject/topic covered, including to support within the Pastoral team, the Medical Centre and online organisations.

EQUALITY

Under the Equality Act 2010, St. David's has a duty not to discriminate against any of the protected characteristics. Due regard has been given to equality law when developing and implementing St David's policies, practices and day-to-day activities. St David's will continually monitor the way this policy operates to ensure it does not unlawfully discriminate, permit harassment or victimisation, or limit equality of opportunity. St David's is committed to meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 at all times.

PARENTAL RIGHT TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILD FROM RSE

'RSE will be a mandatory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales for all learners from age 3 to 16 ("the Act"). This means that all learners must receive this education. There is no right to withdraw from RSE in the new curriculum.'
https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-05/consultation-documentrelationships-and-sexuality-education-guidance-and-code_0.pdf

CONCLUSION

The RSE Policy for St David's College reflects the School's aims and complements other associated policies, such as GSE, Safeguarding/Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Confidentiality, SEN and Equal Opportunities.

It is intended that by following this Policy, St David's College will enable all students to make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions about their own behaviours, values and attitudes. St David's College, in partnership with the Governors, the students and the parents of its students, aims to produce well-informed, well-balanced, responsible and caring members of the community, capable of sustaining fulfilling and successful relationships at all levels.