

# Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Secondary Schools Policy

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# Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Secondary Schools Policy

## 1. Rationale

In Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. A key part of this relates to relationships and health education, which must be delivered to every primary-aged pupil.

Relationships education focuses on giving pupils the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. Health education focuses on equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.

We understand our responsibility to deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate and evidence-based relationships, sex and health curriculum for all our pupils. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships, sex and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered.

Our schools seek to ensure that the RSHE curriculum protects, informs and nurtures all pupils. It clearly differentiates between factual teaching (biology, medicine, the law, marriage, different types of families and the composition of society) and moral teaching about relationships and values, recognising that the distinction can be easily blurred and that there needs to be discernment about the way this is taught. We teach RSHE within a moral (but not moralistic) framework.

## 2. Aims

This policy supports a whole school approach to RSE within the curriculum, and throughout the life of the Trust and its community. It is consistent with current legislative frameworks and statutory guidance.

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) in Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils consider how to ensure that they treat themselves and others, at all times and in all contexts, with dignity and respect
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

## 3. Definition of terms

For the purpose of this document:

- a. Members, Trustees/Directors and Governors are referred to as Trustees;
- b. The Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust is referred to as The Trust and refers to all schools within the Trust;
- c. School or Academy refers to any one of the schools or academies within the Dartmoor

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Multi Academy Trust;

- d. Staff refers to all staff working at any one of the schools within the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust;
- e. Pupils/children refers to all those being educated or on site at any one of the schools within the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust.

## 4. Statutory Requirements

As a Multi Academy Trust our secondary schools must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

In our Trust, we teach RSE as set out in this policy. This policy is associated with the PSHE Policy and the PSHE Programme of Study.

Schools must have regard to the statutory guidance, and where they depart from those parts of the guidance which state that they should (or should not) do something they will need to have good reasons for doing so.

The policy must also be applied within the framework of other relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010.

## 5. Policy Development

Our school policies have all been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- a. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- b. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- c. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- d. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
- e. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with Trustees and ratified

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## 6. Principles and Values

The Trust believes:

- that RSE should be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life;
- RSE is an entitlement for all young people;
- in encouraging every pupil to contribute to their community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn;
- RSE should support and promote family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness;
- that family is a broad concept; there is not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches;
- in encouraging pupils and teachers to share and respect other's views.
- in generating an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment;
- in recognising that parents are key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up;
- that we must aim to work in partnership with parents and pupils, consulting them about the content of programmes;
- that the wider community has much to offer and aims to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

## 7. What is Relationships and Sex Education?

As a Trust we value diversity and foster mutual respect, modelling and inspiring attributes in pupils such as respect, courtesy and honesty. These underpin and inform the relationships we have, between pupils and between pupils and adults.

- RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.
- It involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.
- RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

RSE is taught within the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum and some content may also be delivered through the Religious Education (Beliefs and Values), Physical Education (PE) and Computing and IT curriculums.

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

- Families and people who care for me

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- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

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).

## Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Education

There is statutory guidance on the importance of teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Physical health and mental wellbeing will play a key role in delivering our PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) and will be enhanced by our Physical Education and Science curriculums. The strands included in statutory Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Education are:

- mental wellbeing; internet safety & harms;
- physical health and fitness; healthy eating;
- drugs, alcohol and tobacco;
- health and prevention; basic first aid;
- and changing adolescent body.

## 8. Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is developed in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils 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.

## 9. Delivery of RSE

PSHE sessions are timetabled into the school week and delivered by teaching staff.

Delivery of the RSHE content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Teachers will liaise with staff, SENDCo and parents when necessary to adapt the content and resources to a level suitable for individual SEND pupils.

## 10. Inclusion

- Ethnic and Cultural Groups** - We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups.
- Pupils with Special Needs** - We will ensure that all young people receive relationships and sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

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- c. **Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation** - We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that relationships and sex education is relevant to them.

## 11. Roles and responsibilities

- a. **Trustees** - will approve the RSE policy and hold the Principals to account for its implementation.
- b. The **Principals** - are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 11).
- c. **Staff** - are responsible for:
  - i. Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
  - ii. Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
  - iii. Monitoring progress
  - iv. Responding to the needs of individual pupils
  - v. Responding appropriately to pupils 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 Principal.
- d. **Pupils** - are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

## 12. Parents' right to withdraw

In the secondary phase, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory 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. There is no right of opt out from the statutory relationships education components.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education and they will be supervised but alternative teacher supervision, one to one teaching and/or admission to another teaching group may not be practical, possible or feasible.

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## 13. Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and are required to report all disclosures. In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- a. This matter will be reported immediately to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) via the online reporting system (CPOMS).
- b. The young person will be strongly encouraged wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice.
- c. The young person will be properly advised about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.
- d. The DSL will give due regard to satisfying themselves that no young person of any age is involved in a relationship that is potentially coercive or exploitative. Where this is thought to be the case, child protection measures will be taken.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that they cannot ever promise confidentiality.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that they cannot ever promise confidentiality.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

## 14. Training

Staff who teach RSE are trained in the delivery of RSE as part of their professional qualification training and/or induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Principal/Lead Teacher of RSE will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

## 15. Impact

Assessment methods include;

- assessment is built into the RSE programme to inform planning
- summative assessment at the end of the RSE unit
- pupil self-assessment is used where appropriate
- identify pupils who have exceeded or fallen short of the module objectives and those that have achieved it

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- teachers will keep a note of pupils who have missed some or the entire module due to absence from school

The delivery of RSE is monitored by a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the quality of education team through: e.g. lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil voice

## 16. Policy Circulation

- a. This Policy will be published on the Trust's website
- b. This Policy will be circulated to every Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee by sending an email to the link on the Trust's website on an annual basis and when each new Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee joins the Trust.
- c. The Trustees, in consultation with the Local Governing Bodies, are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.



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## 17. Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class/Form	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	



# **Relationships and Sex Education Policy 2022/23 (local version)**

Version control

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Policy approved by: Local Stakeholder Board

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Version	Date	Details
1.2	May 2023	Review and reformat with reference to new curriculum model

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

This policy is written with due regard for the public sector equality duty that is placed on all schools. Tavistock College will make reasonable adjustments for members of the school community with SEND and protected characteristics and guard against discriminatory practices and victimisation to ensure no-one is treated unfairly.

### **STATEMENT**

We firmly believe that Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) delivered via the curriculum, the school environment and the school ethos is an essential part of a students' development. Not only does it provide information, it helps students develop their skills and form positive beliefs, values and attitudes which are in line with our Trust's cooperative values.

It is our belief that effective RSE has a positive impact on self-esteem and enables our students to have a positive view of relationships, sexuality and sex and embeds a culture of both personal and mutual acceptance and respect.

Although it is important that the RSE programme recognises that there may be different cultural or faith-based views relating to this area of the curriculum, it is essential that what is taught reflects the diverse society in which we live, which includes LGBT+, and that all children have access to age appropriate information free from stereotyping or discrimination.

### **AIMS**

At Tavistock College, the aims of our Relationships and Sex Education policy 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
- Educate older students on sexual harassment and abuse within and external to school
- Be flexible and representative of our contextual needs to safeguard our students.
- Ensure that all students, including those with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities are able to access the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum in a developmentally appropriate way so that they can keep themselves safe.

The objectives of the Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum at our school are to:

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all students are entitled;
- To raise students' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others;
- To help students develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness) and make the most of their abilities;
- To clarify/reinforce existing knowledge and correct misconceptions and myths;
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to effectively manage the influences of their peers and the media;
- To help gain access to information and support;
- To develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle;
- To respect and care for their bodies;
- To help students understand their sexual feelings and behaviours, so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives;
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood (including parenthood).
- To develop their skills of considering other points of view.
- To develop their skills of empathy.
- To help them acknowledge their own agency in situations.

## **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education>) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>).

Relationships and Sex Education at secondary has always been an important part of the education we provide to our students. The DfE carried out an extensive national consultation and these, along with Health Education, became a compulsory part of the curriculum for all schools from September 2020.

At Tavistock College we teach RSE as set out in this policy. We also follow the PSHE Association thematic model as a curriculum intent and implementation.

## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

- Review of RSE curriculum content with staff involved in the delivery of RSE (annual).
- Consultation with students through student evaluation (annual)
- Consultation with school governors
- Community and family feedback process (annual)

- Before the RSE unit in year 9 parents are informed by letter about the content and they are invited to express their views or concerns. This is subject to ongoing consultation and in future it is intended to extend consultation with families. This takes the form of a PSHE/RSE curriculum letter which is sent in the Autumn term.
- The policy is reviewed annually by school leaders and the Local Stakeholder Board.

## **DEFINITION**

Relationships, sex and health education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of loving, caring and consensual relationships. It is about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

Tavistock College sees RSE as a core component of our responsibility towards the well-being of our students. We aim to foster an open dialogue, grounding in the values outlined below.

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 and instead focuses on promoting healthy and positive relationships through our students being empowered through the knowledge acquired through their RSE curriculum.

## **VALUES**

In addition Tavistock College believes that RSE should be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life and that it should be an entitlement for all young people. It values the importance of family and it is respected as a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches. It encourages students to respect each other's views and to be aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other. We aim to generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment. We also recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their young people about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers and students, consulting them about the content of programmes. We also recognise

that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, youth and social workers.

RSE at Tavistock College involves learning the importance of values, learning about the value of family life and stable and loving relationships, and encouraging responsible behaviour.

The personal and social skills which are developed through the RSE programme are learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively, to develop self-respect and empathy for others, learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice, developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made and to empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances.

## **CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION**

The PSHE curriculum is built around three core themes; health and well-being, relationships and living in the wider world. Whilst there are three separate core themes, there is an extensive overlap, so that some units may draw from more than one theme. Therefore elements of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are also taught within both 'Health and Wellbeing' and 'Relationships'. At Tavistock College we have adopted the PSHE association thematic model of the programme of study which provides a spiral curriculum to develop knowledge, skills and attributes. Prior learning is revisited, reinforced and extended each year.

In each year we teach the following RSE units (detailed below with accompanying PSHE topics which are not all listed here);

### **Year 7 (Autumn Term)**

Transition and safety including transition to secondary school and personal safety in and outside school.

### **Year 7 (Spring Term)**

Diversity, prejudice and cyber bullying.

### **Year 7 (Summer Term)**

Health and puberty-healthy routines, influences on health, puberty and unwanted contact. Students also learn about building relationships, self-worth, romance and friendships (including on-line) and relationship boundaries.

### **Year 8 (Autumn Term)**

Domestic conflict

### **Year 8 (Spring Term)**

Discrimination in all its forms including; racism, religious discrimination, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

### **Year 8 (Summer Term)**

Identity and relationships -gender identity, sexual orientation, consent, sexting and introduction to contraception, FGM.

Year 9 (Autumn Term)

Peer influence, substance abuse and gang exploitation.

Year 9 (Spring Term)

Respectful relationships- families and parenting, healthy relationships, conflict resolution and relationship changes.

Year 9 (Summer Term)

Intimate relationships-relationships and sex education including consent, contraception, STI's and attitudes to pornography and diversity, as well as developing and changing bodies (e.g. perimenopause and menopause).

Year 10 (Autumn/Spring Term) Respectful relationships-families and parenting, healthy relationships, conflict resolution and relationship changes.

Year 10 (Summer Term)

Intimate relationships - consent, contraception, STI's and attitudes to pornography and diversity.

Year 11 (Autumn Term)

Communication in relationships-personal values, assertive communication (including in relation to contraception and sexual health) relationship challenges and abuse.

Year 11 (Spring Term)

Responsible health choices and safety in independent contexts.

Year 11 (Summer Term)

Families - Different families and parental responsibilities, pregnancy, marriage, forced marriage and changing relationships.

RSE is inclusive of all students to ensure that they:

- Receive their sex education in the wider context of relationships.
- Are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.
- Develop positive attitudes to sexuality.

#### *Children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities*

Teaching and resources will be scaffolded as appropriate to address the needs of these children in order for them to have full access to the content of sex and relationship education. To ensure that the curriculum can be accessed by all students, we have worked with our Trust primary schools to access developmentally appropriate materials as well as using the NSPCC 'Pantosaurus' literature.

#### *Equal opportunities*

Every student is entitled to receive RSE regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability, sexuality, language special needs, disadvantage and looked after

status. It is our intention that all children have the opportunity to experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development with differentiated provision if required.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **7.1 The Local Stakeholder Board**

The Local Stakeholder Board will hold the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **7.2 The Principal**

The Principal 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).

### **7.3 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Planning and preparing resources and Intellectually Preparing for teaching
- 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 nonstatutory/non-science components of RSE.

The whole school RSE programme will be led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The curriculum is largely delivered by class teachers/form teachers or senior leaders and by science specialist teachers within the Science curriculum.

Staff are regularly trained and briefed so that they are prepared to deliver this content. The safeguarding and inclusion teams are involved in planning and delivery to ensure that RSE especially meets the needs of the vulnerable and reflects any current issues of themes.

### **7.4 Students**

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, do so following Tavistock College values, treating others with respect and sensitivity.

Staff are aware that teaching RSE can lead to related disclosures from students and know that they need to follow the academy safeguarding policy should this arise. Staff are also able to consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead with regards to advice on delivering sensitive content to some student groups. A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns exist.



## **PARENTS/CARERS RIGHT TO WITHDRAW**

Parents/Carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents/Carers 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 Assistant Principal who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A member of the senior team will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the students' educational record. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

A 'withdrawal form' can be found as an appendix to the Trust RSE policy.

## **TRAINING**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of our continuing professional development calendar.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

## **MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Faculty Leads/Heads of Year and Senior Leaders.

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006) of Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance RSE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2022)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

RSE is monitored and evaluated regularly. As a result of this process changes will be made to the Relationships and Sex Education programmes as appropriate.

Furthermore, staff will be asked to complete surveys to ascertain their views on the RSE provision annually to help inform future planning.

The school will assess the effectiveness of the aims, content and methods in promoting pupils' learning by lesson observation, sampling teachers planning, questionnaires to teachers and pupils and feedback from parents.

The effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing student's learning and implementing change if required.

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Principal.