



# Relationships and Sex Education Policy 2024/25 (local version)

Document control		POLICY LEVEL: School/College	
Approved by	LSB	Approved Date	October 2024
Portfolio / Author	J Buchanan	Next Review	September 2025
Published Location	<a href="https://www.tavistockcollege.org/our-college/policies/">https://www.tavistockcollege.org/our-college/policies/</a>		
Version Number	Date issued	Author	Update information
1.2	May 2023	J Buchanan	Review and reformat with reference to new curriculum model
1.3	September 2023	J Buchanan	Clarity on families requesting resources added. Update to curriculum overview
1.4	September 2024	H Blackmore	Awaiting release of updated statutory guidance. No change to previous policy at this point.



## **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 a small specialist team of teachers.

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 RIGHTS**

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.

If parents/carers wish to view resources that are used in RSE lessons at Tavistock College, please contact the College reception or Julia Tosdevin (Head of PSHE) directly to make an appointment.

## **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.