Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Definition
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. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Aims of the Policy
Graduately Developing Futures (GDF) believes that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs led RSE. We believe that through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference. We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our students. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Our aim is:

- To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, RSE issues
- To dispel myths e.g. gender stereotypes
- To explore a range of attitudes towards RSE issues and to help pupils to reach their own informed views
- To develop respect and care for others
- To increase each pupil's self-esteem
- To develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations and prepare pupils for puberty and adolescence. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others
- To eradicate homophobic, transphobic and transgender abuse

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision. We will ensure the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents, including through publishing the policy on our school website.

Statutory requirements

- Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education
- Parents will be able to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school) from any or all aspects of Sex Education, other than those which are part of the science curriculum

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- Where pupils are withdrawn from sex education, schools should document the process and will have to 'ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.'

Curriculum

Our PSHE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary. RSE elements are mapped in red. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students.

Equality, inclusion and social justice

We believe that RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to an RSE that makes every student feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBT+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE. An inclusive RSE Curriculum at GDF will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between students and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

Definition of relationships and sex education

We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health. We take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way and using a gender equity and human rights framework. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other. To cover the curriculum content outlined in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our students to build positive and respectful relationships online and offline. We seek to ensure that it gives students the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- realise their health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal and sexual identity and the personal/sexual identities of others
- understand family structures, committed relationships and the legal status of different types of long-term relationships

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- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Relationships Education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- 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). The programme will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate. School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when teaching RSE.

Roles and responsibilities

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

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- 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 in the first instance.

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

Student voice
Student voice is central to the culture and ethos of GDF. We use student voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging RSE is to children's lives. Throughout our RSE scheme of work we embed pupil voice practices to enable students to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers and to ensure that they listen to other opinions and evidence, reflect on their own perspectives and take a broader view.

We want to ensure that all pupil voices are heard but that those views that are hurtful, offensive or exclusionary do not dominate and are addressed. We want to ensure a culture where human rights, social justice, inclusion and diversity are promoted.

Answering student questions
RSE explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others. As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way and take into account whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons. School staff will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their students that could make either party vulnerable. We believe that an open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older students. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in RSE. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm and abuse when they are able to discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

Parents' right to withdraw
We believe that the successful teaching of RSE involves parents/ carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/ carers can play an important role in the RSE of their children through exploring discussions at home that have taken place in school. If parents/carers have any concerns or special circumstances the school should be aware of, or would like any further information about the curriculum, please contact sandrapay@graduatelydevelopingfutures.co.uk

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships Education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the Principal. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

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Training
Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their CPD. The school leadership team will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or other health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Monitoring arrangements
The delivery of RSE is monitored through work and SOW scrutiny and learning walks. Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed by SLT annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by SLT.

Safeguarding and child protection
GDF acknowledges that RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. RSE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse, or have experienced abuse. We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some students could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures. We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons. While GDF wants to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy. At GDF we do this by using a number of teaching techniques including the use of a working agreement, where rights respecting ground rules (class charters) are created with students on what makes a safe and welcoming environment for all. Once ground rules have been set, we will check they are in place throughout the scheme of work and actively referred to. Through the use of ground rules and other approaches, such as distancing techniques, we believe the school can create a supportive environment for discussions that can be sensitive or difficult.

Review
This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis as a minimum. Next review date 01.09.2027

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Appendix 2 - Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS			
Name of Child		Class	
Name of Parent/Guardian		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent/Guardian signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents/guardians	E.g. removed from which lessons and doing which projects instead.

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Appendix 3 - This policy should be read in conjunction with:

• Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
• Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
• Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
• Equality Act 2010 and advice for schools
• SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
• Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
• Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
• Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
• Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
• The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
• SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).

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Appendix 4 - Teaching Resources:

Relationships Education Safeguarding:
NSPCC PANTS rule with film

Abuse in relationships:
Disrespect NoBody (Home Office and Government Equalities Office)

LGBT inclusivity:
Stonewall lesson plans and materials for primary and secondary

Resources covering all contexts, including online, and specifically relationships and bullying, alcohol, smoking, stress, body image: Public Health England website with videos made by young people and resources tested with teachers *(Some primary resources but need to be selective as it is combined with KS3/4 resources. Mental well-being section mainly secondary)*

Mental health
Mental health and emotional wellbeing: PSHE Association lesson plans

Online safety
Education for a Connected World: UKCCIS framework of digital knowledge and skills for different ages and stages

Sexting
UKCCIS advice for schools on preventative education and managing reports of sexting

Thinkuknow is the education programme from National Crime Agency (NCA)-Child Exploitation Online Programme (CEOP), which protects children both online and offline. The site offers materials for parents, teachers and pupils on a wide range of online safety issues and facts about areas such as digital footprints, recognising fake websites and checking URLs.

PSHE
PSHE Association Programme of study for KS1-5

Extremism and radicalisation
Practical advice and information for teachers, teachers in leadership positions and parents on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation *(School toolkit to develop policy)*

Curriculum
Non-statutory framework for Citizenship KS 1 and 2 (Non-statutory programme of study)
Schools may wish to draw on the Citizenship programme of study in their planning

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Data to understand the health and wellbeing needs of the local school-age population
Public Health England's Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network brings together a range of publicly available data, information, reports, tools and resources on child and maternal health into one easily accessible hub.

It includes school-age health profiles and young people's health profiles:
https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/child-health/profile/childhealth-young-people

The indicators allow areas to see how they perform against the national average and against other local areas. These tools, accompanied by local health intelligence, will be useful in supporting schools to identify and respond to the particular health and wellbeing needs of their local school-age population.

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