



RELATIONSHIP (AND SEX) EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation		
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This Policy applies to all year groups at Thomas's Schools, including the EYFS.

Thomas's London Day Schools operates as a united group of schools with a similar ethos and values and as such is referred to as a singular body. However, in some areas, it is appropriate for each school to adopt discrete procedures, acknowledging the individual identity of each school and its specific personnel and systems. These procedures can be found by clicking on the relevant school link below the contents list of this Policy.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Thomas's Confidentiality Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, PSHE Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Wellbeing Policy.

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SCHOOL PROCEDURES

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- [Thomas's Clapham Curriculum Coverage](#)
- [Thomas's Fulham Curriculum Coverage](#)
- [Thomas's Kensington Curriculum Coverage](#)

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and off line. This presents many positive and exciting

opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. The School recognises its responsibility to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of its pupils.

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society

This Policy follows the DfE statutory guidance ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education’ June 2019 which states that from the Summer Term 2021, Relationships Education is compulsory in primary schools and Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in secondary schools (Years 7 and 8).

It was developed following consultation with Principals, Heads, and staff and the parent and pupil body. It is also underpinned by the stated school aim that Thomas's, while welcoming pupils of all faiths nevertheless adheres to the principles of Christian belief, which govern the behaviour of one person towards another. Each individual is encouraged to behave in a natural, happy and responsible way and to be mindful of the needs of others.

2. AIMS

The aim of Relationships Education is to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy, both physically and mentally.

Through the provision of high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching, the School aims to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adolescence and adult life.

It seeks to provide a safe and stimulating environment which, in partnership with parents and the wider community, will enable pupils to learn about moral, physical and emotional development.

3. PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING RSE

Relationships Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It prepares children for the changes and challenges of puberty and

allows them to consider the responsibilities of adulthood. It also teaches about reproduction and sexual health but does not promote early sexual activity or any one type of relationship.

At all times, teaching of RSE will be sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law. The school will ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. The school will comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act (2010) under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are protected characteristics.

3.1 Why should it be taught in school?

Relationships Education begins at a very early age and, while much of it is learnt from parents, it is also received from friends, books, magazines, television, internet, music, films and so on. Some of this information can be incorrect, confusing or frightening.

Relationships Education in school provides a secure framework and environment in which pupils can be given the facts using appropriate materials. It also allows them to develop necessary personal skills and a positive attitude to sexual health and well-being.

Wide ranging research has shown that children want information about changes and situations they will experience before they happen to them. A structured programme in school increases the probability of this being achieved. Also, although children want to be able to discuss relationships and sex with their parents, many parents and children prefer the school to take a lead and provide a springboard for the discussion. A partnership between home and school and open dialogue between parent and child are the ideal.

3.2 What does the School want Relationships Education to do for the pupils?

Relationships Education will:

- provide information which is easy to understand and relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of the children;
- include the development of communication and social skills;
- encourage the exploration and clarification of values and the development of positive attitudes.

Through Relationships Education we want to ensure that the children:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings, friendships and relationships;
- are able to name parts of their body and describe how their bodies work;
- can protect themselves and ask for help and support;
- are prepared for puberty;
- learn about the nature of marriage/stable relationships and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children;
- understand and respect different types of relationships, including friendships, family relationships and dealing with strangers;
- understand the characteristics of healthy relationships;
- understand how relationships may affect mental and physical health.

and in the Upper School:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;
- understand the law regarding the age of consent and the arguments for delaying sexual activity to maturity and within a loving, responsible relationship;
- are aware of online safety with regard to forming relationships;

- understand the reasons for protected sex, avoiding casual sex and the importance of sexual health;
- understand and respect all sexual orientations;
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships including the concept of consent;
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others
- communicate effectively;
- have sufficient skills and information to be able to protect themselves.

4. PROCEDURES

Relationships Education is not taught in isolation. It is rooted in our PSHCE programme and the Science curriculum and it is supported by the whole School's ethos.

Lessons are accessible to all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities. These pupils can be more vulnerable to bullying; therefore sensitive and age-appropriate relationship education is an essential part of their learning and the learning of others.

4.1 Curriculum

From Reception – Year 6 the focus is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and the relationships with other children and with adults.

Relationships Education is made of 5 areas of focus:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

A breakdown of aspects of these areas can be found in **Appendix 1** of this Policy.

The pupils are also introduced to the early concepts of sex education in a graduated age-appropriate way, drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the Science curriculum and ensuring that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings. Details of the curriculum covered by each school can be found in the school specific links at the start of this policy.

In Key Stage 3 (Years 7 & 8) these themes are developed further and additionally guidance is given on the facts and law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. The issues of grooming, sexual exploitation and internet safety may also be addressed sensitively and clearly. The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds.

The compulsory part of Relationships Education is taught through Science lessons in line with the Science National Curriculum.

The Science National Curriculum requires that in the Lower School pupils are taught:

- that animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce

- to recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans and other animals
- that humans and other animals can produce offspring and that these offspring grow into adults
- to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others, and to treat others with sensitivity

In Years 3 to 6 the following concepts are revisited as part of the compulsory Science curriculum:

- that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction
- about the main stages of the human life cycle

In Years 7 and 8 the following concepts are revisited:

- that fertilization in humans...is the fusion of a male and a female cell
- about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
- about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation
- how the foetus develops in the uterus
- how the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health.

Where any of this information or these topics are introduced through the Relationships Education syllabus earlier than the year designated by the Science syllabus, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the lessons.

Discrete lessons are allocated for those parts of the Relationships Education syllabus that cannot be delivered via Science, PSHCE, Assemblies, Circle Time and other subjects. These are taught in the Lower School by the form teacher and in the Prep School either by the form teacher or by a volunteer colleague plus supplementary specialist visitors from outside agencies when felt to be appropriate.

4.2 Delivery

All form tutors are familiar with this policy and the syllabus and will be prepared to support pupils and answer direct questions as appropriate.

The School is committed to employing active learning methods which involve pupils' full participation. It is essential that schools can help pupils develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about relationships and sex.

Most lessons will be taught to full classes, with gender groups for certain topics as deemed appropriate.

- **Ground rules** help to create a safe environment for both teacher and pupil. They should be established with each class before Relationships Education lessons commence.
- **Distancing techniques** help to avoid embarrassment and protect privacy. Role play, case studies with invented characters, appropriate videos, etc can help pupils to discuss issues in a depersonalised, safe environment.
- **Dealing with questions.** Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teachers will be supported and prepared for the unexpected, for example:
 - the ground rules should be referred to if a question is too personal;

- if a teacher does not know the answer to a question they should acknowledge this and research it later;
- question boxes may be used so pupils may ask a question without having to do so publicly;
- if a teacher feels that a question is too explicit, is too advanced for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class or raises any safeguarding concerns, the teacher should acknowledge the question and promise to deal with it on an individual basis. The teacher will inform parents about any issue or question that he/she feels needs to be followed up at home unless that matter raises safeguarding concerns when advice will first be sought from the DSL;
- if a teacher is concerned that a child has disclosed any matter which raises a safeguarding concern they should follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and make a report to the DSL immediately.
- **Discussion and reflection** should be a part of the Relationships Education lessons. Active learning ensures opportunities for considering beliefs and attitudes and for developing greater understanding. Watching a video or reading written material must be used only to support or to complement wider structured activities.

Factual information in written form may be useful for the pupils to have for future reference.

4.3 Working with Parents

Parents are the key people in:

- teaching their children about relationships and sex
- maintaining the culture and ethos of the family, in whatever form it takes;
- helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up
- preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

Parents need to know that the personal beliefs and attitudes of the teachers will not influence the teaching of Relationships Education. Teachers will work within the guidelines of this policy and the scheme of work.

The school will provide support for parents through sharing with them the school's Relationships Education programme contents and by working with the PTA to invite external speakers to contribute to the parent education programme.

Parents have the right to request the withdrawal of their children from all or part of the Relationships Education provided at school except for those parts included in the Science syllabus. Any such request should be made to the Headteacher. The school will make alternative arrangements for pupils in such cases and will make available an information pack for parents.

4.4 Safeguarding and Confidentiality

The best interests of the child are our main concern. Children have a right to expect school to be a safe and secure environment. Teachers need to be aware that effective Relationships Education can lead to disclosures from pupils, often unintentionally, that raise child protection concerns. Key points to be aware of are:

- the school has in place a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and a Confidentiality policy;
- teachers can never offer or guarantee unconditional confidentiality;

- any visitor from an outside agency involved with pupils in Relationships Education will be made aware of the confidentiality rules and whom to approach on the staff with concerns.

4.5 Resources and Training

The School is committed to using the best teaching materials and to providing appropriate training and support for staff. PSHE Leaders are responsible for monitoring training needs and for researching and providing appropriate resources.

Resources used in RSE lessons will be made available for parents to view prior to use with the children.

5. MONITORING

The provision of the RSE curriculum and the balance with the Science curriculum will be monitored annually.

The Head, Heads of Upper and Middle School (where applicable) and the Head of Lower School are responsible for the Relationships Education scheme of work. The Pastoral leaders within each school are responsible for monitoring its delivery.

6. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This Policy bears due regard to the following statutory guidance and other advice.

DfE Statutory Guidance ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (Relationships Education) and Health Education’ (June 2019)
DfE ‘Parental Engagement on Relationships Education’ (2019)
DfE ‘Mental health and behaviour in schools’ (November 2018)
The Christopher Winter Project for SRE Education (2016)
DfE Government Response: ‘Life Lessons: PSHE and SRE in Schools’ (July 2015)
DfE Supplementary Guidance ‘Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for the 21st Century’ (2014)
DfE Draft Guidance to Schools on Sex and Relationships Education (2010)
The Education Act (2002)

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: DfE Guidance on RSE areas of focus

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY APPENDIX 1

DfE ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education’ Areas of Focus

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

Theme	Detail
Families and people who care for me	<p>that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.</p> <p>the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other’s lives.</p>
	<p>that others’ families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children’s families are also characterised by love and care.</p> <p>that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children’s security as they grow up.</p> <p>that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. <i>(Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples)</i></p> <p>how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.</p>
Caring friendships	<p>how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.</p> <p>the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.</p> <p>that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.</p> <p>that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.</p> <p>how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.</p>
Respectful relationships	<p>the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.</p> <p>practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</p> <p>the conventions of courtesy and manners.</p> <p>the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.</p>

	<p>that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.</p> <p>about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.</p> <p>what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.</p> <p>the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.</p>
Online Relationships	<p>that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.</p>
	<p>that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.</p>
	<p>the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.</p>
	<p>how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.</p>
	<p>how information and data is shared and used online.</p>
Being safe	<p>what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).</p>
	<p>about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.</p>
	<p>that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.</p>
	<p>how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.</p>
	<p>how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.</p>
	<p>how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.</p>
	<p>how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.</p>
	<p>where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.</p>