



Relationships Education and, Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Introduction

- The School believes that effective relationships education and relationships and sex education is essential for young people to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. The aim of relationships education and relationships and sex education is to help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as to support and navigate relationships developed through childhood and adolescence. The School recognises that 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 self-efficacy. These subjects can support children and young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.
- The School recognises that the role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow to maturity and to form healthy relationships. The School's relationship education and relationships and sex education programme is intended to complement and support the role of parents and carers in educating their children about sexuality and relationships.
- The School recognises an aim of this policy is to help to create a culture of respect, safety, equality and protection.
- The School recognises it has a crucial role in preventative education in respect of safeguarding; sexual violence and sexual harassment. The most effective preventative education programme will be through a whole school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- The School has a clear set of values and standards upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. These are underpinned by the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and pastoral and support systems as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based relationships education and relationships and sex education programme delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.
- The School recognises the central role that the relationships education and relationships and sex education programme plays in key regulatory standards: for example, through the School's accountability to its inspectors' consideration of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and leadership and management.
- The School recognises the role of Pupil voice and the benefits of hearing the lived experience of pupils in creating, developing and reviewing the relationships education and relationships and sex education programme and School culture.
- The School's relationships education and relationships and sex education programme reflects and supports the School's vision and values, including to value one another and our environment.



- The School value to 'value one another' is an important aspect of PSHE.

Scope and Application

This relationships education and relationships and sex education policy applies to the Lower School and Senior School age phases of the School.

The policy applies to all staff (including employees, fixed term, part-time, temporary and voluntary staff and helpers) and pupils of the School.

Regulatory Framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;

Education Act 2002;

Children Act 1989;

Equality Act 2010;

Children and Families Act 2014;

Children and Social Work Act 2017;

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (DfE, September 2021 and effective until 31st August 2026);

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex and Health Education guidance (DfE, July 2025 and effective from 1st September 2026);

Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2025) (**KCSIE**);

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (DFSIT, DfDCMS and UK Council for Child Internet Safety, March 2024);

Working together to safeguard children: statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (DfE, December 2023, updated February 2024);

Behaviour in schools: advice for Headteachers and Staff 2022 (DfE February 2024);

Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, July, 2022, in force from September 2022, updated July 2023);

Respectful School Communities: Self-Review and Sign posting tool (DfE);

Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum (DfE, February 2022);

Teaching about relationships, sex and health (DfE, February 2021);



Teaching on-line safety in schools (DfE, January 2023);

Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (OFSTED, June 2021); and

Political impartiality in schools (DfE, February 2022);

Technical guidance for schools in England (EHRC, updated July 2024);

SEND code of practice: 0-25 years (DfE and DHSC, updated September 2024);

Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, updated November 2018);

Promoting children and young people's mental health and well-being (DfE, updated November 2023);

Preventing Bullying (DfE, updated July 2017);

Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance (Home Office, July 2022);

EHRC Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts; and

SMSC requirements for Independent schools (DfE, updated August 2019).

The following School policies, procedures, documents and resources material are relevant to this policy:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Risk Assessment Policy for Pupil Welfare;
- Anti-bullying Policy;
- Disability Policy;
- SEN Policy;
- Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy for Pupils;
- Curriculum Policy;
- Kirkstone House School Overview of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education
- Upper School Handbook on Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), Emotional Wellbeing (EW) and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC);



Publication and Availability

This policy is published on the School's website.

This policy is available free of charge in hard copy on request from the School Office.

A copy of this policy is available for inspection from the main School Office during the School day.

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Definitions

Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

References to the Head mean the Headteacher of the Kirkstone Senior School and Lower School Lead.

References to Parent or Parents means the natural or adoptive parents of the pupil (irrespective of whether they are or have ever been married, with whom the pupil lives, or whether they have contact with the pupil) as well as any person who is not the natural or adoptive parent of the pupil, but who has care of, or parental responsibility for, the pupil (e.g. legal guardian).

Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

Our Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy including the approval of this policy.

The Proprietor is required to ensure that all those with leadership and management responsibilities at the School actively promote the well-being of pupils. The adoption of this policy is part of the Proprietors' response to this duty.

The School will take a whole school approach to relationships education and relationships and sex education. A designated member of staff organises multi-Agency days and oversees the curriculum provision. This ensures that provision sits within the context of the School's broader culture, ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally.

To ensure that efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the proprietors have allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	Frequency of Review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with law and best practice	The Headteacher and Head of Pastoral Care	As required and at least annually
Formal annual review	Headteacher reporting to the Proprietors	As required and at least annually.



Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness	The Headteacher; Deputy SENCO / DSL and Head of Pastoral Care	As required and at least termly.
Maintaining up to date records of all information created in relation to this policy and its implementation as required by the UK GDPR	Deputy SENCO / DSL, Head of Pastoral Care	As required and at least termly.
Seeking input from interested groups such as pupils, staff and parents to consider improvements to the School's processes, curriculum and resources under this policy	Head of Pastoral Care	As required and at least annually.
Formal Annual Review	Headteacher and Head of Pastoral Care	Annually

Definition of relationships education and relationships and sex education

Relationships education for primary education and relationships and sex education for secondary education is part of the PSHE curriculum in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum, intended to provide what children and young people need to know about how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. It comprises learning about the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children; safety in forming and maintaining relationships; the characteristics of healthy relationships and how relationships may affect physical and mental health and wellbeing as well as signposting sources of support for those pupils who have any concerns about relationships. The education provided is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate and developmentally appropriate and is taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs, needs and vulnerabilities of pupils and parents, with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need.

Sex education, as part of relationships and sex education in secondary schools will build on the foundations of primary relationship education and will support pupils in developing healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds. It includes also the teaching about intimate sexual relationships, including sexual health, healthy sexual relationships and mutual respect, personal privacy and gender stereotypes. It also includes what the law says about sex, relationships, consent and young people, as well as pornography, broader safeguarding issues and using technology.



Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools. The School science curriculum policy includes reference to the subject coverage in related areas including the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and the reproduction in some plants and animals. In addition, the School delivers sex education for primary aged pupils as set out in Appendix 1.

Curriculum Content

By the end of primary education, relationships education will include teaching about families and people who care; caring friendships; respectful relationships; online relationships and safety and being safe.

In addition to relationships education, the School will teach sex education including teaching contained in the Science curriculum about the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and the reproduction in some plants and animals and all aspects of reproductive health education.

By the end of secondary education, relationships and sex education will include teaching to develop knowledge on the topics specified for primary education. In addition, the curriculum provision will include teaching about families; respectful relationships, including friendships; online safety and awareness; being safe and intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

By the end of secondary education, pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught including (but not necessarily limited to): marriage, consent, including the age of consent, violence against women and girls, on-line behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexting, youth produced sexual imagery, nudes etc) pornography, abortion, sexuality, gender identity, substance misuse, violence and exploitation by gangs, extremism / radicalisation, criminal exploitation (for example through gang involvement or county lines drugs operations), hate crimes and female genital mutilation.

Equality

The School will ensure that it considers the makeup of the pupil body, including the gender and the age range of the pupils and take this into account in the design and teaching of inclusive relationships education and sex and relationships education. The School will consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics. This may include positive action to support girls, as although anyone can experience sexual harassment and violence, research indicates that girls are disproportionately affected.

The School will be alive to issues such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, sexism, homophobia and stereotypes and will take positive action to build a culture of respect where such issues will not be tolerated and any incidences are identified and tackled. The School is committed to the approach that the starting point should always be that there is zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. Sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up', or 'boys will be boys' as the School recognises that this can lead to unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. The School will act as though sexual harassment and on-line sexual abuse are happening even when there are no specific complaints or reports about it.



The School will consider ways to foster healthy and respectful peer-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or other characteristic including through these subjects and as part of a whole school approach.

As part of this whole school approach, pupils will be consulted through the pupil body to give their views on addressing issues through relationships education and relationships and sex education programme and / or School culture.

Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND): relationships education and relationships and sex education will be accessible for all pupils including those with SEND and other vulnerabilities and to ensure this, teaching will be differentiated and personalised. The School is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and will take this into consideration when designing and teaching these subjects.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+):

The School encourages pupils to respect other people paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. The School is aware that those perceived to be LGBT+ can be targeted by others and is committed to countering homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse. LGTB+ inclusion is part of the statutory relationship's education and relationships and sex education curriculum and the School will ensure that its teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in content and will consider when it is appropriate to teach pupils about LGTB+. This content will be fully integrated into the programmes of study rather than delivered as a stand- alone unit or lesson. School staff will endeavour to provide a culture for LGBT+ or gender questioning pupils to speak out or share their concerns with a member of staff.

N.B. The wording above aims to be consistent with the wording from the relevant sections of Relationship education, relationships and Sex education (RSE) and Health Education (2021) and KCSIE (September 2025) and remains under review, pending government consultations on this subject. Staff must refer to any updated guidance, where available, in dealing with such affected pupils.

The School is aware of its legal duties, including those pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful for the School to discriminate against or harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in prescribed circumstances including:

- in the way it provides education for pupils;
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service;
- subjecting them to any other detriment.

The School is also aware of its duties to teach about equality issues and to ensure teaching at the School does not discriminate against pupils.

Curriculum Delivery

The School will ensure sufficient and regular time is allocated within the curriculum to deliver the relationships education and relationships and sex education curriculum effectively and in a manner designed to facilitate meaningful discussion.



Curriculum content and curriculum delivery will be underpinned by the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and pastoral support system as well as by a planned programme of evidence based relationships education and relationships and sex education, delivered in regularly timetabled lessons in KS3, Specialist days in KS4 and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.

The School invites visiting speakers and professionals to our multi-Agency days to help enhance and enrich the curriculum, its pupils' experiences and broaden their horizons. The School will ensure that the arrangements for all visiting speakers are suitably assessed before the visit takes place and that clear protocols are followed to ensure that those visiting speakers and resources used are suitable, compatible with the School's duties, age-appropriate and aligned to the developmental stage of the pupils being taught. This includes following the School's Visitors and Visiting Speakers policy. The School will ensure that visiting speakers are appropriately supervised when on School premises.

In the unlikely event that the content, resources or delivery falls outside the school's expectations or is deemed inappropriate, the School will take appropriate action which could involve stopping the presentation altogether.

The content of the relationships and sex education curriculum is delivered through the curriculum areas of Science, PSHE, and other relevant departments.

It is also delivered through the:

Pastoral Programme:

- Tutor time delivered by Form Tutors;
- Assembly delivered by staff or external agencies;
- Collapsed timetables to facilitate specialist Multi-agency days.

Assessment and Pupils Progress

Teachers are expected to plan, teach and assess the subject and measure pupil progress in accordance with the high expectations across the School in other subject areas. This will be regularly reviewed by the Head of Pastoral care and the Lower School lead.

Resources

All resources will be reviewed to ensure that they are suitable, compatible with the School's duties, age-appropriate and aligned to the developmental stage of the pupils being taught. The School will regularly assess the resources it will use prior to delivery of the programme and keep the resources under review.

The School may share sample resources with parents as part of its consultation and review process.

Pupil Questions

The School appreciates that pupils may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond the School's curriculum. The School's approach is to ensure that teachers are confident to deal with such questions in an age-appropriate manner, recognising that children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information and that such questions may indicate a safeguarding response. INSET and other training will seek to include information on how teachers can respond.



Safeguarding, Reports of Abuse and Confidentiality

The School will follow *Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)* and will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including about how to stay safe online and respectful relationships. Appropriate open forums to discuss potentially sensitive issues will be made available to children. Children will also be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. The School recognises that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all pupils and a more contextualised approach for more vulnerable pupils, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed or to respond to the incidents or any patterns identified by the School, for example in particular cohorts.

Teachers will follow the School's policy on confidentiality between themselves and students and manage an appropriate level of confidentiality. Students should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained, but teachers cannot offer or promise absolute confidentiality. Teachers will follow the School's safeguarding policy if a child protection issue is raised.

In addition, but not alternatively to following the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, teachers will also consider whether any anti-bullying and / or disciplinary issues arise following any pupil concerns and will follow the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and / or The School's Anti-bullying Policy as appropriate.

The School will encourage students to talk to their parents or carers and support them to do so. The School will also inform students of sources of confidential help, for example, their counsellor, GP or local young person's advice service.

Where the school invites external agencies to support the delivery of these subjects, the School will agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding report will be dealt with by the external visitor.

Parents' and Carers' Participation

The School recognises that parents and carers are the first teachers of their children and that they play a vital role in:

teaching their children about relationships and sex;

maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;

helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up;

preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

The School will consult with parents and carers in the development and review of this policy and on the content of the relationship education and relationship and sex education programmes, including a sample of resources to be used and providing a copy of the policy and inviting feedback at least annually.

The School will communicate to parents what will be taught and when in delivering relationships education and relationships and sex education.

The School will regularly engage with parents and carers to seek their views on the quality of relationships education and relationships and sex education on School culture.



It will also keep in regular contact with parents and carers reinforcing the importance of children being safe online as technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, particularly those related to child on child abuse.

Parents and carers of pupils at the Senior School have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of relationships and sex education at secondary age except for those parts included in the science curriculum, which cover the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction. The School will make alternative arrangements for students in each case so that they receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Following a request to withdraw in relation to a pupil at the Senior School, the Head will request a discussion with the child's parents or carers, and where appropriate, with the child. Following that discussion, except in exceptional circumstances, the School should respect the parents' or carers' request to withdraw the child, up to three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the School should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. There may be exceptional circumstances where the Head may want to take into account a pupil's specific needs arising from their special education needs or disability into account when making this decision. Any discussions and decisions will be documented by the School.

Parents and carers of Kirkstone House Lower School have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of relationships and sex education at primary age except for those parts included in the science curriculum.

The Head will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in Lower School.

The parents' and carers' right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education will be communicated to them by the School. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education.

Consultation

This policy has been produced and will be reviewed in consultation with parents and carers, teachers and pupils and seeks to take into account the views of the School community.

Training

The School will carefully consider the suitability of staff teaching relationships education and relationships and sex education and will ensure that they are committed to the priority the School affords to the subject and to professional development in this subject. The School will provide additional resources to staff who are not specialists in the subject in order that they can successfully implement the curriculum.

The school will ensure appropriate training for staff on expressing personal opinions and the use of external resources and visiting speakers.

The School ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their role.



The level and frequency of training depends on the role of the individual member of staff and the need for them to complete risk assessments as part of their role. This will include training of all teaching and pastoral staff in accordance with the DfE teacher training materials in respect of relationships education and relationships and sex education.

The School maintains records of all staff training.

Record Keeping

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

All matters arising from this policy involving a child protection issue will be recorded and dealt with under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy including incidents involving sexual harassment and sexual violence.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The roles with responsibility for PSHE, Science and other relevant subject leaders are as follows:

Senior School: Head of PSHE, Head of Pastoral Care and Head of Science;

Lower School: Lower School Lead, Lower School Advisor.

They will ensure that:

All schemes of work are reviewed on a regular basis to assess the content and that the content as defined within the policy is accurate and conforms to current guidance;

colleagues within their department or staff delivering this curriculum are familiar with this policy and ensure that delivery conforms to the guidelines set down in the policy and its appendices;

staff teaching any part of this programme are asked to review content and delivery. The outcomes of this evaluation are used to inform future amendments to the teaching programme, consultation with parents and any training and development needs;

any review of the programme includes an opportunity for the views of parents to be considered;

the content of all outside agencies' presentations is evaluated to ensure that it is in line with this policy and the statutory guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and sex Education (DfE, September 2021).

September: 2025

Review date: September 2026