



Thirsk School

& Sixth Form College

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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<p>Date of Policy Adoption by Governing Board:</p> <p>12th December 2023</p>		<p>Signed</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>E Lambden</i></p> <p>Emma Lambden Headteacher</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Nick Horn</i></p> <p>Nick Horn Chair of Governors</p>	

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY [RSE]

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD:

It is the responsibility of the Governing Board to make and review a written statement of their policy regarding the content and organisation of RSE at Thirsk School & Sixth Form College. The Governing Board will consult with parents/carers in order to develop a policy which reflects their wishes and the community they serve. It is also the responsibility of the Governing Board to ensure that the policy is implemented in the school and reviewed at appropriate intervals.

THE AIMS OF SEX EDUCATION:

The Government announced in March 2017 that the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education will be statutory in September 2019, and that Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHCE) may also become statutory. This means that RSE must be sensitive to the different needs of individual students and ensure students are able to live in a modern 21st Century Britain that meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Government have a policy statement which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-rse-and-pshe>

WHAT IS RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION?

Relationships and sex education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, sexuality and sexual health. It should support students gain accurate information, develop skills and form positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It also gives students essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful, loving and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline and enabling them to take responsibility for their body, relationships, reproduction, sexual health and wellbeing (NYCC RSE Guidance, Sept 2019).

In summary, this means we have a duty that our Relationships and RSE will be age appropriate, meets the needs of students with special educational needs and disabilities, to build knowledge and life skills over time in a way that prepares students for issues they will soon face such as:

- different types of relationships including respectful heterosexual, homosexual, bi racial friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers, intimate relationships, consent, and relationship abuse.
- how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, gender equality, LGBT+ equality, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships;
- how online and offline relationships, and the media may affect health, safety and wellbeing, including mental health;
- factual knowledge on sex, sexual health and sexuality, set firmly within the context of relationships.

- the law for example, regarding safeguarding issues, marriage, consent, online behaviours such as sexting, pornography, extremism, radicalisation and hate crime.

CONTENT:

How is it taught and by whom?

A piecemeal and physiological approach to RSE is neither sufficient nor appropriate. Thirsk School & Sixth Form College will, therefore, deliver RSE to all students through areas of the curriculum. Lessons are delivered so that students feel safe and are given the opportunity to reflect on values and influences (such as from peers, media faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex, and nurtures respect for different views. Students learn how to get help and treatment from sources such as the school nurse, other health and advice services, including reliable information online. All students are encouraged to understand the importance of equality and respect

The PSHCE is a carefully planned course that follows the North Yorkshire Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship Guidance (September 2019).

The delivery of RSE will be taught:-

- In Years 7 - 8: in dedicated, regular PSHCE lessons, usually taught by form tutors to their tutor groups.
- In Years 9 - 11: PSHCE is a large component of the RS programme taught by a specialist team, as well as through dedicated, regular PSHCE lessons
- In Years 12 and 13: PSHCE is taught in the tutorial programme
- RSE will also be delivered through teaching the National Curriculum Science Programmes of Study from years 7-11. There will also be a programme of regular 'drop down' afternoons for all year groups, some of which will focus on aspects of RSE.. Alongside this, RSE values will be delivered through the ethos of the whole school community, and the school values will underpin the RSE programme.

The following components form the basis of RSE. Each component will be considered several times during the PSHCE course, but, on each successive occasion, in greater depth and comprehensiveness and in keeping with the students' developing understanding, skills and maturity:

Subject Content:

Year 7 studentss will

- understand that in school and the wider community they can be expected to be treated with respect but that they also need to show respect to everyone
- recognise that their happiness is linked to having positive relationships with others
- talk about a range of emotions and identify a trusted adult that they can talk to when they need help/ support both within and out of school

- recognise the qualities and behaviours they should expect and demonstrate in a wide variety of positive healthy relationships both on and offline (including peer relationships)
- recognise bullying and abuse in all its forms both on and offline and between peers and have the skills and strategies to manage being targeted or witnessing others being targeted
- know where to get help if they or someone they know is being bullied (in any form both on and offline)
- be aware of unacceptable and acceptable physical contact and be to identify when someone may be putting pressure on them to do something they are not comfortable with including from peers
- understand the terms associated with sex, gender identify and sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans) and are aware of accepted terminology
- understand what 'sexting' means and involves, the consequences of sexting including the laws on possession of images of children and where to get help if they experience sexting
- know the unacceptability of sexist, racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language and behaviours both on and offline, the need to challenge it and how to do so
- know how to identify and report hate crime
- understand the physical and emotional changes through at puberty and how to look after their body and health as I go through puberty

Year 8 students will

- recognise the qualities and features of a positive relationship both on and offline (trust, respect, boundaries, privacy, consent) and they are able to positively act upon the signs when a relationship is not healthy
- be able to challenge assumptions about the behaviours of young people using social norms data so they are aware of how many people of their age actually use substances and engage in sexual relationships and have considered the personal, social and health consequences alongside the benefits of not smoking, drinking, using substances or starting early sexual relationships
- have considered and discussed media influences on image and behaviours and understand that media portrayal of relationships may not reflect real life
- have rehearsed strategies to help keep safe when communicating on-line
- understand that people can create a specific image through their online life and how this can negatively impact on others through obsessive comparison with others
- be aware of how young people can be groomed or radicalised online and face-to-face and am able to take steps to protect myself and others which includes informing a trusted adult
- understand the short and long term consequences of sending 'nude selfies' including the laws on possession of images and where to get help
- understand what is meant by sexual intercourse, the benefits of delaying sexual relationship and where to access further information on healthy relationships

Year 9 students will

- recognise and respond positively to difference and diversity in their school and community

- show empathy and understanding towards those who choose to live their lives in a different way
- have a range of strategies to manage a breakdown in a relationship including with peers and the effects of change, including loss, separation, divorce and bereavement
- have identified a trusted adult that they can talk to when they need help/ support both within and out of school including concerns about their health
- know that relationships both on and offline can cause strong feelings and emotions including sexual attraction and they can successfully manage these feelings
- be aware of a range of different healthy relationships both on and offline, including those within families, friendships and romantic
- be aware that some behaviours within relationships (including between peers) both on and offline are criminal including violent behaviour, coercive control(grooming), sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable and a trusted adult should always been informed
- know what consent means in relation to sexual intercourse and other activities and that being pressured, persuaded, coerced into something is not 'consent'
- be aware of the laws that protect my rights to withhold consent both on and offline are there to keep them safe
- be aware of the benefits of delaying sexual intercourse and have rehearsed some strategies to help them
- be aware of the full range of contraception that can prevent unwanted pregnancy and STIs this includes where to access local confidential sexual and reproductive health services and treatment
- recognise when they are putting themselves or others under pressure both on and offline to obey 'unwritten rules' or social norms and will be able to positively respond to these pressures
- have considered how they can make their own choices both on and offline without losing friends or credibility and have practiced some strategies to achieve this
- be aware that sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, and can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- understand the risks of physically meeting people they have only previously 'met' on line
- understand the need to establish clear personal boundaries around those aspects of my life they wish to be private, shared only with specific people and understand their right to privacy
- understand how and why some people are radicalised and drawn into extremist behaviour and are able to give a counter narrative
- be aware of how young people can be groomed or radicalised on-line and face -to-face and know how to identify and report such risks which includes telling a trusted adult.
- recognise the signs of someone being radicalised and know what to do if they spot the signs
- understand the principles of Run, Hide, Tell and how to stay safe if there was a serious incident, in the context of a shopping precinct.
- know about the risks associated with female genital mutilation, its status as a criminal act and sources of support

Year 10 students will

- where and how to obtain health information, advice and support including sexual health
- take increased responsibility for monitoring my own health, understand the benefits from screening and immunisation and the benefits of regular self-examination (including testicular and breast self-examination)
- have further considered the terms associated with sex, gender identify and sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans) and are aware of accepted terminology and the expectations of the Equality Act 2010.
- recognise when a relationship is unhealthy (abuse or exploitation) both on and offline and have strategies to seek help
- understand the importance of using contraception and have the skills to communicate which contraception we will protect against STIs', including HIV/AIDs
- access information about the range of STI's, know how they can be tested for and treated
- know where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
- understand the risks related to unprotected sex, which includes exploring the consequences of unintended pregnancy and be able to access impartial information on all of the options available in such circumstances and where to access support including information on miscarriage
- be aware of reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women about the options open to people who would like to conceive and menopause.
- recognise the portrayal and impact of sex in the media and social media (which might include music videos, advertising and sexual images shared between young people, the unrealistic portrayal of relationships and sex in pornography) and its impact on views of a healthy sexual relationship
- understand what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence both on and offline (and between peers) and be able to challenge it and report it
- recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination confidently within school, the wider community and online
- know what hate crime is and how to report it
- understand how technology including social media can be used for grooming/ radicalisation / bullying/harassment and how to seek support and use reporting mechanisms

Year 11 students will

- assess the wider risks and consequences of legal and illegal substance use on personal safety, sexual health, emotional health, career, relationships and future lifestyle
- know where/how to access appropriate information and advice to help keep safe and well, both now and in the future
- have identified a trusted adult to talk to when they need help/ support both within and out of school
- describe the benefits, appropriateness and efficacy of different forms of protection which will protect against STI's and pregnancy and know how to access confidential sexual and reproductive health information and services
- understand how to seek consent both on and offline and to respect others' right to give, not give or withdraw consent to engage in different degrees of sexual activity and other activities and have rehearsed negotiation strategies to keep safe

- understand the characteristics and benefits of positive, strong, supportive, equal relationships both on and offline and how to manage the end of a relationship that is not right for them (this includes peer relationships)
- know that living together, marriage and civil partnerships are relationships that people enter freely and without coercion and can contribute to human happiness and a stable environment to bring up children
- understand the legal status, rights and protections of marriage and civil partnerships and how they are different to couples who are cohabiting
- have an awareness of exploitation, bullying, harassment and abusive relationships both on and offline and how to respond so they are not in a unhealthy relationship whether that is with a partner, friend or work colleague
- be aware of the concepts of, impact and laws relating to domestic abuse, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM both on and offline and know how to access support and help
- recognise the role, responsibilities, skills and qualities required for successful parenting (including the implications of young parenthood)
- understand how my own and others use of substances, alcohol or tobacco can seriously affect their ability to keep themselves and others safe and have practiced a variety of strategies to keep safe
- recognise the importance of keeping myself safe online and having a professional online identity
- recognise and know how to respond to unwanted attention on line such as through grooming/ radicalisation / gambling etc.
- understand the principles of Run, Hide, Tell and how to stay safe if there was a serious incident

MONITORING and EVALUATION:

The Governors will review the policy at appropriate intervals, being mindful of any parental feedback received.

Students have the opportunity to evaluate the delivery of RSE and PSHCE lessons, for example, information from the Growing Up in North Yorkshire survey, completed by our students, is also used to help deliver a unique curriculum that best meets the needs of our students. Student Council will also have opportunities to offer opinions on the delivery of RSE.

Teachers delivering the programme are also consulted to feedback on delivery of content so that information can be tailored and delivered in a manner that best meets the needs of our students.

Parents also have the opportunity to monitor the delivery of RSE and are welcome to inform school of their opinions.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

RSE must be accessible for all students. Differentiated and personalised teaching will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Some students with SEN may be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than their peers. Others may be confused about what is acceptable public behaviour. Children with SEN need help to develop skills in order to reduce the above risks and to learn what sorts of behaviour are acceptable.

Thirsk School & Sixth Form College will, therefore, ensure that all materials used in RSE are differentiated and reinforced according to the ability of the student. Please see the school SEND policy for further information on provision for these students at Thirsk School.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

RSE can be a sensitive issue. To protect privacy and ensure respect for all, staff establish ground rules with students at the onset of work, and includes information on confidentiality and where students can get help with personal concerns both in and outside of school. Staff cannot guarantee students unconditional confidentiality.

Staff will report any information or disclosure which raises concern that a child may be at risk of significant harm to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will then, in line with the School's Child Protection policy act as appropriate.

Students are informed of where to access age appropriate help inside and outside of school, through lesson material in RS, through PSHCE lessons and work booklets and notices around the school site.

The Inclusion Unit at Thirsk school is also available, as an on site support to students.

PARENTS

We work in partnership with families, value their views and endeavour to keep them informed of RSE provision. For this reason, parents are encouraged to access the subject curriculum information on the school website. Many parents find it difficult to talk to their children about RSE.

Parents remain the key people in: -

- teaching their children about RSE;
- maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;
- helping their children cope with emotional and physical aspects of growing up;
- preparing their children for the changes and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings.

Parents may need support in: -

- correct names of bodily parts;
- talking with their children about feelings/relationships;
- answering their children's questions.

All parents/ carers have a legal right (under section 405 of the Education Act 1996) to withdraw their child from sex education within the Relationship and Sex Education programme element of PSHCE lessons (other than the sex education National Curriculum science lessons). A minority of parents/ carers may wish to do so, and in this event, they should contact the Head teacher. The school will discuss individual cases with the family concerned and take the necessary action for the alternative provision in school.

Thirsk School & Sixth Form College will, therefore, inform parents when RSE takes place within SRS and how they can support and complement the educational programme at home.

This RSE policy was written with reference to the following documents. Parents may access the documents using the following links:

- Department for Education: 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' 2019

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

- North Yorkshire County Council: 'North Yorkshire Guidance for Schools on Developing a Relationships and Sex Education Policy and implementing effective service provision' September 2019 (incorporates the DfE guidance on statutory Relationships, RSE and Health Education from September 2020)

<https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health%20of%20Children%20and%20Young%20People/Health%20&%20Wellbeing/Final%20September%202019%20Relationships%20and%20Sex%20Education%20guidance%20for%20schools%20NYCC.pdf>

- North Yorkshire County Council: 'North Yorkshire Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship Guidance for schools including the curriculum entitlement framework. Key Stages 3-4. Updated September 2019- Incorporates the DfE Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education learning outcomes that will become statutory for all schools in September 2020.

[https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health%20of%20Children%20and%20Young%20People/Health%20&%20Wellbeing/Updated%20September%202019%20\(Dfe%20RSE%20and%20HE%20included\)%20Key%20Stage%203-4%20PSHE%20and%20Citizenship%20Guidance%20for%20schools%20NYCC.pdf](https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health%20of%20Children%20and%20Young%20People/Health%20&%20Wellbeing/Updated%20September%202019%20(Dfe%20RSE%20and%20HE%20included)%20Key%20Stage%203-4%20PSHE%20and%20Citizenship%20Guidance%20for%20schools%20NYCC.pdf)

Parents can also find links to resources and help from external agencies will also be available to support parents/ carers in appropriate discussions with their child.

Family planning association link to support parental conversations.

The family planning association offer a wealth of information and tips to support parents in talking to their child about growing up, relationships and sex.

<https://www.fpa.org.uk/relationships-and-sex-education/parents-and-carers>

Online Safety and Sexting

Online safety has been a growing concern on recent years and there are some useful sources of information to explain how children can be kept safe. A couple of useful sites are

UK Safer Internet Centre <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>
Thinkuknow <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Parent Info This site also provides a site dedicated to supporting parents with information and knowledge to help support their children navigate the digital world. <https://parentinfo.org/>

Pornography

NSPCC research in 2016 showed around 28% of children aged 11/12 had seen pornographic material with both actively seeking this and accidental exposure being the case. Maintaining an open conversation with children about this issue will make it easier, if they are exposed to this material, to be able to talk with you about what they have seen and how they felt about it.

Thinkuknow (section around pornography)

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Worried-about-your-child-and-online-porn/>

Consent

Consent is a key aspect of relationships, and especially in sexual relationships, which should be very straightforward. The old adage of "No means No" is useful but what if a No isn't obvious? Consent is only given where there is a **clear and obvious** "Yes" either verbally or through body language. The following website offers a useful video and information explaining consent more fully, including how alcohol for example can affect consent;

Consent is everything <http://www.consentiseverything.com/>

Sexuality

Expressing sexuality without fear of discrimination and / or harm is an important part of positive sexual health, Childline and Support Line offers support and guidance to young people and families

Childline <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/sexual-identity/sexual-orientation/>

Support Line <https://www.supportline.org.uk/problems/sexuality/>

Substance Misuse

Alcohol or other substances can increase the risk of unsafe sex and / or regret where people perhaps go further than intended.

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/talking-drugs-alcohol/>

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's)

The highest rates of STIs occur in young people aged 15 to 25 in England.

NHS Information aimed at individuals aged 13-16years, that maybe useful for parents to be aware of:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/confidentiality-at-sexual-health-services/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/>

Confidentiality and under 16's

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) have produced a couple of useful guides for parents and children explaining how confidentiality applies to young people accessing healthcare services.

RCGP <https://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/resources/a-to-z-clinical-resources/youth-mental-health/information-for-young-people-and-their-families.aspx>

Child and Adolescent Mental health

<https://youngminds.org.uk>

Yorsexual Health

Information about sexual health and contraception services in York and North Yorkshire

<https://www.yorsexualhealth.org.uk/#>