

John O'Gaunt School

Relationship & Sex Education Policy

2026-2027

Date of approval: September 2026

Approved by: Richard Hawthorne, Principal

Review date: September 2027

Aims

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is part of a lifelong 'learning' journey which embeds physical, moral, and emotional development through a diverse and enriched curriculum. We firmly believe that a caring and developmental RSE programme is about more than just biology and the fundamentals of reproduction. High-quality teaching of RSE support and prepare students for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. Young people need assurances that their body image, their behaviour, feelings, and relationships are respected, appreciated, and valued. They also acquire the knowledge and skills needed to develop as human beings whilst remaining appropriate and in line with their level of maturity and developmental needs. Our programme considers all aspects of their developmental needs both emotionally and physically.

At John O'Gaunt, one of our main aims is to develop positive self-esteem for our young people. We have a programme that supports our learners to be resilient thus empowering them to make confident decisions whilst adapting to the changes and challenges that come with personal growth. The programme focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills, attitudes, and behavioural patterns which in turn leads to a better understanding of one's own identity, sexuality, and the awareness of how others perceive or define themselves. In planning and presenting our RSE programme we have ensured all students can express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. They can articulate their thoughts, doubts, and anxieties without fear of reprisal. They can make responsible decisions, communicate effectively, and develop healthy and appropriate lifelong relationships.

Our ethos is to encourage the values and feelings of our students to be discussed and shared throughout their five years at John O' Gaunt. We aim to ensure our young people develop a responsible attitude towards relationships, diversity, and tolerance through the taught education programme that resides within the schools Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE). Sex education will always remain in the context of our students' wider moral, spiritual, social, and cultural development.

Our far-reaching curriculum ensures students are well informed and educated to make sensible and considered choices. We present a range of relevant facts in an objective and balanced way; allowing for many views to be discussed within a framework that recognises cultural and social differences. It encompasses many aspects of individual and family relationships. At John O'Gaunt we aim to ensure our students are safe, confident, and happy individuals.

Statutory regulation and guidance

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#). In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At John O'Gaunt school we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils, and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review of all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation
3. Stakeholder consultation including parents and students
4. Should further amendments be required a similar process will be followed

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.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum referring to guidance set out by the PSHE Association and in consultation with parents, pupils, and staff, considering the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

Our key content to be delivered is outlined below:

- Knowledge and understanding about male and female puberty, menstruation, the physiology of sex, contraception, miscarriage, pregnancy, abortion, sexual health, fertility treatment, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections/diseases
- Exploration of understanding of a variety of personal relationships from friendship to intimacy
- The nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children. This includes the recognition that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage. Students should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society, the roles and responsibilities of parents and the characteristics of successful parenting. There should be no stigmatisation of students based on their home circumstances
- Exploration of issues around bullying, including homophobic and transphobic bullying
- Exploration of moral values, family values, religious values, gender roles and stereotyping
- To understand difference whilst respecting themselves and others in preventing and removing prejudice
- To provide an opportunity for students to examine their own and others' attitudes to sexual activity and related issues
- To learn to understand human sexuality, the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the resultant benefits, and learn about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health
- To promote an awareness of the pressure on young people to behave in certain ways and to help improve assertiveness and the confidence to cope with many different and conflicting pressures
- To promote increased awareness of the challenges which the online world and social media place on young people and to promote safe behaviour online
- To promote awareness of how to obtain further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
- To further develop personal skills and qualities; - i.e. listening, questioning, communicating, standpoint-taking, valuing the opinions of others, empathy, etc.
- To contribute to the promotion of spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of students at school and in preparation for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of adult life
- Being alert to signs that young girls may be at risk of FGM. School summer holiday especially during the transition from primary to secondary schools is thought to be a key risk time for FGM

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).

Delivery

The RSE programme at John O'Gaunt School is an integral part of our whole school PSHE focus firmly embedded into the curriculum. We ensure our content is accessible to all students, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). We work closely with the school SENCO and Heads of Year seeking advice and guidance where appropriate.

- All KS3 PSHE lessons will be delivered by specialised trained staff and students will receive 2 hours per fortnight of PSHE content.
- KS4 (Year10 & 11) PSHE lessons will be delivered by specialised trained staff and students will receive 2 hours per fortnight of PSHE content.

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Where appropriate the school will make use of external agencies when planning and delivering RSE. The rationale behind the involvement of these external agencies is that they can give our students' access to a wealth of experience and expertise, new resources, and different approaches to learning. Teaching resources will be based on approved materials. There will be regard to the age and cultural background of students as well as vulnerable students and students with special educational needs and/or disability. There will be ongoing training provision for staff from the PSHE network.

Responsibilities

The Academy Committee

The Academy Committee will hold the principal to account for the implementation of this policy. The Academy Committee has delegated the approval of this policy to the principal.

Principal

Responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across their respective schools, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils 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.

Pupils

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

Parents and Carers

- The prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents and carers. Parents and carers are key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings
- The RSE offered by the school will support the role of parents and carers considering parental views about content and presentation.
- Copies of this Relationships & Sex Education Policy will be shared with parents via the school website

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from lessons linked to relationship education. However, parents do have the right to withdraw their child from any content linked to sex education but only *if these are non-science components or content and if it is not delivered in the RE Curriculum.*

An updated overview of the content for each year group is detailed in Appendix 1, clearly addressing which content falls under Relationship Education and which falls under Sex Education and highlighting if either are delivered as part of the Science and/or RE curriculum.

Withdrawal

- Parents have the right to withdraw their child/children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.
- Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the Principal. The Principal can refuse a withdrawal request in 'exceptional circumstances'. For example, because of safeguarding concerns or if a pupil is particularly vulnerable. When considering whether exceptional circumstances apply, we need to ask: Are there significant concerns about the pupil in terms of safeguarding or significant vulnerabilities (e.g. due to SEND or other reasons), and do they need to have certain knowledge to be able to look after themselves, keep themselves safe, or be able to express what happens to them.
- A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The request will be discussed with parents we will try to meet with parents/carers who make a withdrawal request, and during the meeting we will discuss: why you don't want your child to take part in the subject, the benefits of sex education, the potential negative effects of withdrawing your child, and what might make them feel more comfortable. We will take appropriate action and ensure that alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education, work will be provided using an alternative area of the school such as .
- Under new guidance from the Department of Education, parents can request to see what their children are being taught in RSE. If you would like to see the resources that are used, please put a request in writing to the Principal.
- Parents/carers cannot withdraw their child from: relationships and health education, or science lessons which cover sex education topics.

Safe and effective practice

- In line with our schools aims, all teachers responsible for delivering aspects of the RSE curriculum will foster learning by creating a healthy, safe, and secure environment in which students feel comfortable
- Teachers and students should negotiate and agree ground rules, e.g. about acceptable behaviour and appropriate language to be used in lessons
- It will be made clear to students from the outset that there may be limitations on confidentiality in certain sensitive areas, e.g. child abuse
- Statements by teachers on sensitive issues such as abortion, contraception, drugs, same sex relationships, etc. will be purely factual and objective. Subjective, personal comments such as - "In my opinion...", "I think.....", "If I were you....." are inappropriate for teachers to use when dealing with sensitive issues (Do's and Don'ts will be made clear prior to the content being delivered).
- Teachers dealing with sensitive issues will only use materials approved by the LA and/or the PSHE association and Unifrog. Members of staff will approach any situation with students who ask for individual advice sensitively and professionally (N.B. These guidelines apply to students asking for individual advice about all sensitive issues e.g. not just about sexual or relationship matters, but also substance abuse, bereavement, illness, etc.)
- Teachers should encourage students to discuss their concerns and/or seek advice from their parents and, if appropriate, relevant medical professionals such as a GP or the school nurse (if available)
- Teachers may refer students to the DSL, DDSL or their progress leader, the welfare team, the school nurse (if available) and counsellors for further support
- Confidentiality should not be promised. If a teacher feels concerned about the raising of a sensitive issue, they should seek the advice of a senior colleague of the child protection team or the DSL/DDSL
- Teachers will remind students to speak to parents/carers and/or family where they have concerns or questions. Alternatively, teachers will advise them where to seek confidential advice and treatment - e.g.

from a G.P., family planning or young peoples' advisory clinic. It is important to distinguish between, on the one hand, the school's function of providing education generally about sex and relationships education, and, on the other, counselling and advice to individual students on these issues, particularly if this relates to students' own sexual and relationships behaviour

- Care must be exercised in relation to contraception advice to students under 16 years, for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful. The general rule must be that giving an individual student advice on such matters would be an inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibilities. Teachers are not health professionals, and it is unlawful for a member of staff to do so
- There will be occasions when teachers and other professionals giving relationships and sex education have to exercise their discretion and judgement about how to deal with particularly explicit issues raised by an individual student. It is unlikely to be appropriate to deal with such issues with the whole class. Where there is a risk that a teacher may be compromised in these circumstances, it would be wiser for them to be accompanied by a member of the SLT team or DSL/DDSL.

Training

Training is available for staff on the delivery of RSE as required. The Principal/school may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Policy Monitoring and Evaluation

The delivery of RSE is monitored and overseen by the Head of PSHE using a thorough and robust monitoring policy which includes student voice, book scrutinises and learning walks.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems including book looks, student voice, learning walks.

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE Lead and Senior Leadership team every two years and at every review, the policy will be approved by the local governing board.



Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school students should know

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	• The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships • How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing • About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

To be completed by Parent:

Name of Child		Year or class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature:		Date:	

To be completed by School:

Signature:		Date:	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents			