



**Aldenham School**

**Relationship and Sex Education  
Policy**

**September 2022  
by Assistant Head - Safeguarding and Welfare (PSG)**

## **Introduction**

Aldenham School recognises the Department of Education's 2017 Policy Statement regarding Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). This amends the 2000 guidance deeming RSE optional in independent schools and will make RSE teaching compulsory from September 2020.

Aldenham School's curriculum plan for Life Matters ensures that pupils are taught age-appropriate topics related to RSE from Years 7-11, believing it to be valuable and important. Wherever possible, the work completed in the classroom will be supplemented by presentations and discussion groups from leading external speakers on curriculum drop-down days.

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils.

## **Definition of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)**

RSE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

In line with government guidance, teaching of RSE should:

- Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe relationships and ensure good communication about these issues covering different types of relationships, including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers and intimate relationships.
- Cover how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships.
- Enable pupils to understand how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health.
- Incorporate teaching on healthy relationships and safety online, including issues around online relationships and their potential pitfalls
- Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media
- Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, in order to make informed choices. In schools this should be part of compulsory curriculum provision.
- Be inclusive in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience particularly HIV status and pregnancy.
- Provide opportunities for reflection in order to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care.
- Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner.
- Ensure pupils are clearly informed of their rights such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding.
- Be relevant and meet the needs of pupils and actively involve them as participants, advocates and evaluators in developing good quality provision.
- Be delivered by competent and confident educators.

- Be provided within a learning environment which is safe for the children, young people and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.

## **Aims**

The aim of RSE in the Senior School is to give pupils the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

RSE is also supported through science lessons. In particular, reproduction in humans (e.g. the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycles, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS).

## **Safe and Effective Practice**

RSE often draw on pupils' real-life experiences. A safe and supportive learning environment will be created by establishing ground rules in each context for the delivery of subject material. It is recognised that the content in RSE can lend itself to revealing Safeguarding concerns. Prior to delivery, all tutors will be reminded of Safeguarding procedures and asked to be aware. Moreover, they will be reminded not to share anything regarding their own private lives in this area and to use correct terms and maintain a professional tone. Confidentiality can never be promised to pupils and no encouragement will be given for them to break the law (i.e. to engage in sexual practice before the age of 16) although non-judgemental information will be given, and questions honestly answered. This may involve pupils being able to ask questions on an anonymous basis.

Teaching staff will endeavour to make sure that their own personal views are not imposed on students. They will also present the facts to students so that they are able to make informed choices.

## **Equality of Opportunity**

Classroom practice and pedagogy will take into account pupils' age, ability, readiness and cultural background and pupils with SEND, and will be adjusted to enable all students to access the learning. We will use Life Matters and RSE as a way to address diversity issues and to ensure equality for all by addressing contextual issues identified through our pastoral management system and wellbeing surveys.

RSE is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination and is mindful of individuals' religious, spiritual and moral beliefs. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act, (2010) to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+). RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding, respect and diversity. Staff have received mental health and well-being training to support students in developing qualities and skills such as resilience, confidence, self-respect and self-control.

## **Parents' right to withdraw their child**

Parents **will not** be able to withdraw their child from relationships education in the senior school. Parents **will** be able to withdraw their child from sex education (other than the sex education which

sits in the curriculum as part of science). However, a child will also have a right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16) even if it is against his/her parents' wishes.

Before granting such a request, the Assistant Head of Safeguarding and Welfare will meet with parents and, as appropriate, with the pupil to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

The School will respect the parents' request to withdraw the pupil up to and until 3 terms before the pupil turns 16. After that point, rather than be withdrawn, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education, the school will make the provision.

If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the school will ensure the pupil receives purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

The School will keep a record of all such decisions.

### **Intended Outcomes**

As a result of our Life Matters and RSE programme, pupils will:

- Develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives now and, in the future.
- Learn to make responsible decisions e.g. about alcohol, drugs, relationships and future careers.
- Learn to recognise and manage risk and take increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- Understand the importance of wellbeing and how to tackle issues that can affect their ability to learn.
- Focus on the importance of building healthy and positive relationships.
- Develop skills such as teamwork, communication and resilience.
- Be encouraged to make positive contributions to their families, schools and communities.
- Explore differences and learn to value diversity in all its forms.
- Reflect on their own individual values and attitudes.
- Identify and articulate feelings and emotions and manage difficult situations positively.
- Learn about the world of work.
- Learn to manage their money and finances effectively.

### **Areas of Assessment**

Pupils' knowledge and understanding through classroom discussion and formative assessment activities. Teachers should collect evidence of learning to make a judgement about pupils' progress. This may include presentations, written evidence, group work, observations.

Application of knowledge and skills in wider school participation, resolving conflict, making decisions and forming positive relationships. Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending the material for PSHE and RSE to ensure it is up to date and relevant.

### **Counselling Services and Health Advice**

Pupils are made aware of counselling and information services both in and out of school and offered appropriate support. Pupils should be encouraged to seek advice from the School Health Centre or their own GP on any health-related issue. Teachers will also signpost to other appropriate and relevant sources of information.