



Relationships & Sex Education Policy

2024

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy which will support them in evaluating consequences and making good choices later in life
- Support students in developing and maintaining positive and healthy relationships
- Support students in keeping themselves safe on and offline
- Show students how 'Autonomy' and 'Attachment' from The 4 As are particularly relevant when learning about Relationships and Sex Education.

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained secondary school we must provide RSE to all students as per the [Children and Social work act 2017](#). In teaching RSE, we must have regard to the most recent DfE statutory guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education> issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

3. Policy development

Following the issue of the most recent DfE guidance in September 2021, the consultation and policy development process involved:

1. Review – a member of staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to give comments on the policy
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the Management Committee and ratified.

4. Definition

Relationships and Sex Education (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.

Malden Oaks believes that good quality RSE is an entitlement for all students and must:

- Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, in order to make informed choices;
- Be positively inclusive in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience particularly HIV status and pregnancy;
- Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe relationships and ensure good communication about these issues;
- 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;
- Provide opportunities for reflection in order to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care;
- Allow students to learn how to manage their emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- Develop critical-thinking as part of decision-making. Learn how to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice, and the consequences of these choices;
- Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner;
- Ensure students 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 our students, 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 students and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

To be effective, RSE is taught within a broader PSHE education programme and, when applicable, across the curriculum. RSE enhances and is enhanced by learning around, for example, online safety, mental health, drugs and alcohol, and the development of skills and attributes such as risk management, resilience and decision making.

An important element of planning a PSHE education curriculum, including RSE, is about tailoring the learning to meet the needs of students. In order to design a high quality, relevant and engaging PSHE and RSE curriculum, we assess the needs and priorities of our students. This process includes evaluating national trends and local health data, gathering students' views and specific lesson activities - as well as assessing their existing knowledge, understanding, skills, beliefs and attitudes.

(see Appendix 1 for statutory curriculum aspects)

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and know where to find reliable information online.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum. Individual students may seek additional and further information from the School Health Team.

RSE is an identifiable part of the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all Key Stages. At Upper School and 6 Oaks, it is led by a PSHE specialist teacher, who teaches all students at KS4 and 6 Oaks. This planning is shared with staff teaching within the Tuition Service. Within Tuition, each student is allocated a form tutor who delivers PSHE at least every half term with their allocated form tutees. At Lower School, there is also a curriculum lead teacher for PSHE, who plans and disseminates their programme to relevant teaching staff for shared delivery. Staff are supported to participate in regular training and events to keep up to date. There is no duty for us to deliver the statutory aspects to medical tuition students as they remain the responsibility of their mainstream school.

It is important to acknowledge that students arrive at Malden Oaks at different times throughout their secondary education, and will often have missed significant chunks of learning; we need to retain flexibility in our planning for different individuals and different groups. Our priorities are to fill knowledge gaps, clarify misconceptions and myth bust, whilst also working to ensure our longer stay students receive the statutory requirements in RSE & Health Education, in addition to receiving other vitally important, though not yet statutory, elements of our PSHE programme.

We work in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning at school and their rights as a parent/carer. This includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the school nurse and other health and advice services, including

reliable information online. In addition, up to date information about local services is displayed at all sites.

Additional support and information is available from the school nurse who holds regular drop ins at Upper and Lower School. Referrals can also be made for students accessing other parts of Malden Oaks' provision for appointments with the school nurse. Heads of School can also request attendance of the nurse at required meetings and consultations as required.

In Upper School and at 6 Oaks, students have a tutor who has a pastoral responsibility which includes supporting RSE. In Tuition, each student is allocated a form tutor who delivers PSHE content at least each half term. The set up at Lower School follows the primary school model so students are taught by the same teacher for all subjects, including form time. Consequently, Lower School students and their teachers build excellent working relationships, meaning their teacher is best placed to lead on RSE education for their own groups.

The science curriculum in all maintained schools includes content on human development, including reproduction as does the Child Development Cambridge Nationals course, an option subject at Upper School.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

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, LGBTQI+ 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).

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The Management Committee

The Management Committee will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the 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 Headteacher.

In **Lower School** all class teachers deliver RSE.

In **Upper School**, RSE is overseen by a subject specialist but also taught by Heads of Year and some Tutors during PSHE and subject specialist science teachers.

At **6Oaks** specialist staff deliver RSE. Those staff are the PSHE lead and the science teachers

Within the **tuition service**, allocated tutors and specialist science staff deliver RSE.

Students

Students are encouraged to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, expected to treat others with respect and sensitivity, adhering to classroom ground rules.

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to request to withdraw their children from 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 2 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as relevant to their role in the school. Specialist teachers will have access to external courses and updates.

The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Heads of School and overseen by the Deputy Head. This is monitored through:

- Scrutiny of schemes of work
- Book Looks
- Learning walks
- Student voice

Students' progress in RSE is monitored by Heads of School as part of our internal assessment systems.

Appendix 1: Curriculum

By the end of secondary school:

At Malden Oaks, we will continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and, in addition, cover the following content by the end of secondary:

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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)
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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

KS5 Learning opportunities in Relationships and Sex Education

The learning opportunities at KS5 assume that students have already covered those in KS4. However, students bring a range of experience and understanding, so it is often more appropriate to draw on those at KS4. Prior learning is revisited and reinforced through learning that 'connects' it to contexts that are relevant to this age group, such as the workplace.

Where appropriate, students learn....

Sexual health

- to develop a nuanced understanding of how to select appropriate contraception in different contexts and relationships
- how to reduce the risk of contracting or passing on a sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- how to take responsibility for their sexual health and know where, and how, to access local and national advice, diagnosis and treatment

Relationship values

- how to articulate their relationship values and to apply them in different types of relationships
- to recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination and understand rights and responsibilities with regard to inclusion
- to recognise, respect and, if appropriate, challenge the ways different faith or cultural views influence relationships

Forming and maintaining respectful relationships

- to manage mature friendships, including making friends in new places
- to manage personal safety in new relationships, including online activity or when meeting someone for the first time whom they met online
- to develop and maintain healthy, pleasurable relationships and explore different levels of emotional intimacy
- to evaluate different degrees of emotional intimacy in relationships, the role of pleasure, how they understand the difference between 'love' and 'lust'
- to use constructive dialogue to support relationships and negotiate difficulties
- to manage the ending of relationships safely and respectfully, including online
- to recognise the opportunities to build meaningful relationships in the workplace and the boundaries around professional relationships

Consent

- to understand the moral and legal responsibilities that someone seeking consent has, and the importance of respecting and protecting people's right to give, not give, or withdraw their consent (in all contexts, including online)
- to understand the emotional, physical, social and legal consequences of failing to respect others' right not to give or to withdraw consent
- how to recognise, and seek help in the case of, sexual abuse, exploitation, assault or rape, and the process for reporting to appropriate authorities

Contraception and parenthood

- to understand the implications of unintended pregnancy and young parenthood; to recognise the advantages of delaying conception, whilst acknowledging the changes in fertility with age
- to negotiate, and if necessary be able to assert, the use of contraception with a sexual partner
- how to effectively use different contraceptives, including how and where to access them
- to evaluate the most appropriate methods of contraception in different circumstances (including emergency contraception)
- to access the pathways available in the event of an unintended pregnancy and understand the importance of getting advice and support quickly

Bullying, abuse and discrimination

- to recognise and manage negative influence, manipulation and persuasion in a variety of contexts, including online
- to recognise and manage different forms of abuse, sources of support and exit strategies for unhealthy relationships
- to recognise forced marriage and 'honour' based violence; to get help for themselves or others they believe to be at immediate or future risk
- to understand their rights in relation to harassment (including online) and stalking, how to respond and how to access support
- strategies to recognise, de-escalate and exit aggressive social situations
- to evaluate the dangers and consequences of being involved in gangs, serious organised crime or carrying a weapon
- ways to celebrate cultural diversity, promote inclusion and safely challenge prejudice and discrimination

Appendix 2: Parent form: request to withdraw child from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/CARER			
Name of child		Tutor Group	
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			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	