

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

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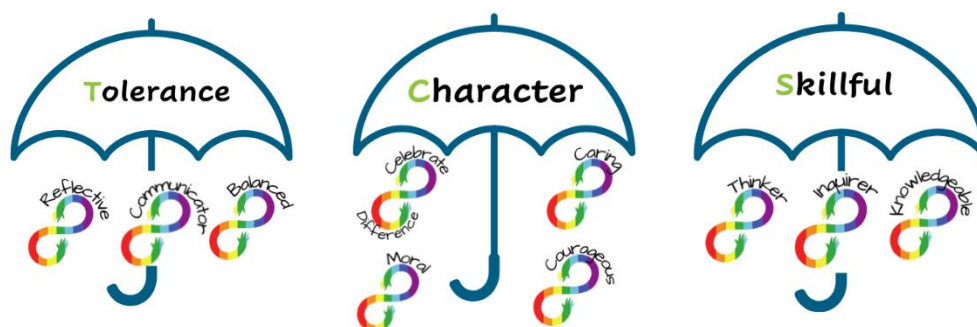
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1 Introduction

1.1 Aims

At The Cavendish School (TCS) our mission is to Enable-The-Self. This we aim to achieve through our vision of providing a safe and nurturing environment, in which pupils can enjoy learning, achieve their potential and develop the key skills they need to thrive as independent, emotionally and socially confident young adults.

1.1.1 Our values:



We have a culture of unconditional positive regard for all of our pupils and understanding of behaviour of communication. We believe that all of our pupils can grow and achieve.

This policy covers The Cavendish School's (TCS) approach to Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE). We believe that relationships, sex and health education is important for all of our pupils to enable them to fulfil safe and healthy and happy lives. It is the right of every person to access education which promotes safety, equality and the ability to make informed choices regarding their relationships and health. What we choose to teach, how and when it is taught, is decided by statutory guidance and is sensitive to diversity, inclusion and the needs of individual pupils.

The aims of RSE are to:

- ∞ 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;
- ∞ help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy;
- ∞ create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships;
- ∞ teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies;
- ∞ enable students to stay safe, prepared for life in modern Britain and able to make a positive contribution to their community.

1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of School along with the curriculum leads, is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non science components of Sex Education. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring policy and practice are adhered to and that all information is made accessible to all parents and carers and that the policy is published on the Academy website.

The RSHE policy is written and reviewed by the PSHE and RSE coordinators and the whole school curriculum lead. RSHE is taught by teachers and teaching assistants who are informed in what and how to deliver and are familiar adults for the pupils they teach. Staff will receive RSHE training as appropriate organised by the PSHE and RSE coordinators.

1.3 Legislation (Statutory regulations and guidance)

Revised Department for Education statutory guidance states that from September 2020, all schools must deliver relationships education (in primary schools) and relationships and sex education (in secondary schools).

Primary Curriculum: Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Secondary Curriculum: Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-science 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 1 of this policy and addressed to the Head of School. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Head of School will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

The RSHE policy supports/complements the following policies:

- ∞ PSHRE curriculum overview
- ∞ Science curriculum overview
- ∞ Equality and Diversity

Documents that inform the school's RSHE policy include:

- ∞ Education Act (1996)
- ∞ Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- ∞ Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- ∞ Equality Act (2010),
- ∞ Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- ∞ Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- ∞ Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- ∞ The updated Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) guidance July 2025 to be implemented by September 2026.

In the planning and delivery of activities, staff will be mindful that: Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against students because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

2 Curriculum Design

The school's mission of 'enabling the self' and ethos which empowers the students to flourish, thrive be independent and have high aspirations of themselves, reflects perfectly in the PSHRE curriculum.

The PSHRE curriculum is designed to incorporate all aspects of our IB learning statements in order to create well rounded students. At the end of their school journey, our students will:

- ∞ We need all of the pupils to be **knowledgeable** about the wider world to ensure they are safe and contribute to the community in a positive manner.
- ∞ We need well rounded individuals who have the right **morals** that will support their local and wider communities.
- ∞ Pupils need to ensure they are **reflective** to ensure they are considering their actions and how these may impact those around them.
- ∞ Able to **celebrate the difference** in cultures and societies around the world, learning that diversity is key to understanding the world around them, including their community.
- ∞ **Caring** towards each other and those less fortunate, whatever their back grounds.
- ∞ Able to **communicate** their ideas with growing confidence and understanding.
- ∞ **Balanced** in their opinions of other cultures and societies, being able to see positives and negatives in the events that are taught.
- ∞ We want to create **Courageous** individuals who feel ready to tackle the world and have the confidence to seek employment opportunities where suitable.

- ∞ **Inquiring**, we want pupils to be curious learners who want to know about the world around them and how they can make positive contributions.

The RSE curriculum which works in collaboration with PSHRE. It is our job within to help ensure that the pupils are able to flourish and thrive in this ever-changing world. Our pupils need to be able to form strong, effective and appropriate relationship which will enable them to become immersed in their communities. The Curriculum will have a “focus on building positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships... and avoid language which might normalise harmful behaviour among young people.”

- ∞ Pupils will engage in a range of conversations regarding issues that will face them in their lives, helping to create **Knowledgeable** pupils who can make suitable, safe and appropriate choices.
- ∞ Through RSE our students will gain the ability to become **Reflective** within their own lives so they can better their prospects for the future.
- ∞ We want to ensure that all our pupils leave education with appropriate **Morals** around relationships and their health.
- ∞ With pupils beginning to consider their selves and others we will be able to **celebrate the difference** we all have.
- ∞ For pupils to become **Thinkers** so they are able to have the right skills to analyse and take responsible actions with others.
- ∞ **Caring** is an important part of any relationship so as children and young people they can show empathy, compassion and respect.
- ∞ If people are able to **communicate** effectively and with confidence they can collaborate effectively with others to meet an agreement considering others.
- ∞ When we are **Balanced**, we are considering all aspects of our lives, to achieve well-being for ourselves and others.
- ∞ RSE will enable our pupils to become **inquiry** learners, giving them the tools and understanding to safely and respectfully navigate relationships in all areas of the community.
- ∞ We aspire for our pupils to be **Courageous** showing resilience and commitment in the challenges they face when dealing with relationships with others.

2.1 Our PSHE and RSE curriculum works on four pillars of strong practice:

2.1.1 Communication

“Never assume a person who has difficulty communicating has nothing to say.” Stacy Sekinger

Our priority is to enable every child, verbal or otherwise to develop their expressive and receptive language. Signs and symbols such as Makaton and PECS may be used along with sensory circuits and teaching approaches that support cognitive processing.

The Zones of Regulation curriculum has been introduced across the school to support communication and self regulation. RSHE lessons will ensure pupils have the correct language and are taught subject specific vocabulary. We aim to give every child the tools they need to be able to express themselves regarding their health, their bodies and their choices. Lessons will be planned and resourced as appropriate for the individual. This may involve Makaton signs and symbols, role play, objects of reference, small group discussion etc. Creating a safe, supported environment will enable pupils to communicate more openly and freely within lessons and the use of question boxes will enable pupils to engage anonymously.

2.1.2 Safety

“If children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, learn to trust, share their feelings, and grow.” Alfie Kohn

RSHE places an emphasis on pupils making informed choices. Pupils with SEND are more vulnerable to exploitation. Our curriculum recognises that particular issues such as online safety, keeping safe in different environments, understanding the law and understanding their rights, are a priority for all of our students and so these are approached through discrete sessions as well as being revisited in school assemblies and within cross curricular opportunities. All staff are trained in safeguarding and can notice the signs of abuse and how to deal with any

disclosure or safeguarding concerning. Educating young people about their bodies, emotional and sexual health is essential to enabling them to lead safe and healthy lives. Pupils are encouraged to discuss or report anonymously via the SHARPs system any concerns

2.1.3 Wellbeing

"I am different but not less." Temple Grandin

Autistic individuals have a much higher chance of also developing mental health difficulties. It is imperative that education enables our pupils to develop an understanding of themselves and to support their self-esteem. PSHRE at TCS happens across the curriculum and beyond the classroom. Enrichment opportunities, the arts, the international dimension, preparing for adulthood sessions through cokin and forest school sessions allow children to express themselves and to engage with the wider world. Pupils can seek emotional support through 1:1 Talk Time, Art therapy, play therapy, wilderness therapy, music therapy, cooking session or from their staff teams. We also employ a school counsellor and work closely with specialist agencies and parents and carers. Learning about relationships, sex and health reduces anxiety around bodily changes and relationships. It builds self-awareness, understanding of one's body and emotions and self-esteem and leads young people to make healthier transitions into adulthood.

2.1.4 Independence

"Disability only becomes a tragedy for me when society fails to provide the things we need to lead our lives." Judith Heumann

The curriculum at The Cavendish School aims for every individual to reach their highest level of independence. This is achieved through a personalised provision, informed by the pupils's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Our curriculum is designed to teach the key skills required for a successful, healthy and happy adulthood. Independence cannot be achieved without gaining an understanding of yourself, your needs and those you share the world with. Relationships, sex and health education enables this through teaching facts, dispelling myths and signposting pupils to safe people and places for support and information whilst they are at and after they leave TCS.

3 Safe and Effective Practice

We ensure a safe learning environment by grouping pupils sensitively in accordance with their needs and peers. We select staff with the most appropriate experience who are familiar where possible, to the pupils. Ground rules are established collaboratively with pupils and are agreed and revisited at each session. Question boxes are used to support pupils to feel able to ask about anything they are unsure of anonymously. Questions are welcomed and always handled with sensitivity and with clarity. Small group sizes and good parent/carers communication facilitates an honest and open discussion.

4 Safeguarding

In line with our School Safeguarding policy and practise pupils are aware that confidentiality will be respected unless an individual is at risk and then the information will be shared. Adults delivering RSHE are aware that relationships and sex education, due to the subject matter, may lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. All adults receive safeguarding training annually with regular updates where appropriate and follow safeguarding procedures. When specialist visitors support RSHE lessons, we ensure they are safe and informed and that they adhere to all safeguarding practices.

5 Engaging stakeholders

The policy will be available on the academy website. As part of our whole school approach to RSHE, information regarding our resources and approaches will be shared as part of parent/carers information sessions. We notify

parents and carers in advance of RSHE lessons via letter outlining what will be taught and who to contact if they require further information. Any parent/carer with specific questions may contact the PSHE and RSE coordinators or a member of the leadership team to discuss their concerns.

6 Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

The delivery of RSHE is monitored in our school by senior leaders through:

- ∞ The review of planning, pupil work and lesson visits.
- ∞ Progress data.
- ∞ Feedback from pupils, parents and carers and other stakeholders.

Appendix 1: Request To Withdraw From The Non-Science Components of Sex Education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS:

Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	

Reason for withdrawing from the non-science components of sex education within RSE:

Any other information you would like the school to consider:

Parent signature:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL:

Discussion held with parents on (date):

Agreed actions from discussion with parents: