



**John Watson School**

# Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

Signed by *Lynn Wong*  
Chair of Governors.

Date: May 2022

This policy will be reviewed as per the review schedule set by the Governing body

## Introduction and overview of our RSE policy:

Underpinning all learning at JWS is the development of functional skills which is underpinned by our Core Values: **SLICE**

Safety	Learning	Independence	Communication	Engagement
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Relationships and Sex and Health Education involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity, at a level appropriate to the individual pupil. It entails sharing information and exploring issues and values, rather than promoting sexual activity, in order to support emotional, social and cultural development.

The aim of Relationships and Sex education (RSE) at our school is to:

- Develop confidence to listen, think and communicate feelings and relationships
- Make and maintain friendships
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Understand and respect different types of families, including families with same sex parents
- Develop and promote equality and respect in relationships, challenging gender stereotypes and inequality
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

## Statutory requirements

As a maintained special school, we must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

We are not required to provide sex education for primary aged pupils, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

As a maintained special school, we must provide RSE to all secondary age pupils under the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This is in line with pupils' understanding, needs and stage and age appropriateness as to which topics are covered. JWS supports each child and their family on an individual basis, following our differentiated curriculum pathway approach.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in: Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996. Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, therefore, focuses on Relationships Education. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.

### **Curriculum Delivery**

At John Watson School learning about any additional content on sex education<sup>1</sup> will be determined on an individual pupil basis<sup>2</sup> to meet the needs of the pupil. The school will maintain open and ongoing communications with parents/carers.

At JWS we have a unified approach to supporting Relationships and Sex education. We recognise the following...

- It is important to ensure that RSE is appropriate to the pupils' maturity, social understanding and interest in the subject, tailoring the delivery to support them to fully access the learning.
- Correct language is used for private body parts, as patterns and language that are first learned can remain for life. If a child does use a family word, it is important from a safeguarding perspective for staff to use biological terms, to avoid any misunderstanding.
- Establish early partnership with parents / carers in order to enable consistent, clear messaging to pupils and supporting family engagement with RSE.
- Listen to pupils and young people, identify their needs and create a balance, alongside being sensitive to the perspectives of families who come from a wide range of backgrounds and diverse cultures.
- A range of curriculum models will be used for general class delivery, e.g. Circle Time. With additional individual planning required around specific topic areas. This can be done using planning tools, such as the PSHE Association Planning Framework for pupils with SEND.
- Alongside chronological age and physical maturity, emotional and social maturity need consideration.
- It is important that all pupils are prepared for puberty, and this may require some individualised support and potentially some single-gender work to learn about the more intimate aspects of personal hygiene and sexual development.
- Pupils will feel listened to and accepted when exploring their identity and relationships, including areas such as gender identity and sexual orientation, e.g. identifying as non-binary, or LGBTQ+.

Relationship and Sex Education is covered mainly under the health part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum, additionally some aspects are taught through Science, RE, music and drama. This part of our curriculum supports learners in finding out how to develop relationships, look after themselves, keep themselves safe and how to take care of their bodies. We also recognise the importance of social relationships enabling our students to function as part of a whole community on many levels. Rather

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<sup>1</sup> Primary schools that choose to teach sex education must allow parents a right to withdraw their children. Unlike sex education in RSE at secondary, in primary schools, headteachers must comply with a parent's wish to withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science. Schools will want to draw on the good practice for conversations with [parents around the right to withdraw](#).

<sup>2</sup> Schools must also ensure that their teaching and materials are appropriate having regard to the age and religious backgrounds of their pupils. Schools will also want to recognise the significance of other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities of their pupils.

than seeking to encourage early sexual experimentation, the aim is to teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others, starting with the understanding of public and private spaces and behaviours.

Whilst our RSE curriculum pays due regard to statutory requirements, our curriculum takes into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils and the communities they come from. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed.

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

For primary aged pupils we focus on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- ★ Families and people who care for me
- ★ Caring friendships
- ★ Respectful relationships
- ★ Online relationships
- ★ Being safe

For secondary aged pupils, 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 (where appropriate and needed for individual pupils attending JWS)

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families may include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some pupils may have a different structure of support around them (for example, Children Looked After or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

### **Inclusivity**

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- Encourages pupils to be curious

During lessons, makes pupils feel:

- Safe and supported
- Able to engage with the key messages
- Confident to ask questions and discuss topics

We will also make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that is appropriate for them, for example:

- Linked to the pupils individual learning plan targets and their EHCP outcomes
- One to one sessions (all in agreement with parents/carers)
- A whole-class or small group work where appropriate
- targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats
- Meetings with parents/carers to empower them and share how we are supporting RSE related topics for their child. Sharing of resources and strategies that work with the pupil at school, in order to create consistent approaches that will ensure the pupil makes progress towards their RSE related outcomes.

### **Use of resources**

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are sensitive of protected characteristics, such as culture and gender
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress
- Are sufficiently differentiated to support all pupils, e.g. use of objects / PECS / Symbols / photos or pictures to support understanding

### **Roles and responsibilities**

- The governing body will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
- The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE. 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.
- Teachers / Staff are responsible for delivering RSE in a sensitive way, in line with SLICE. They will take into account the pupils' age and stage of development as well as their barriers to learning, interests and the Curriculum Pathway they are following (Fundamental Pathway, Enhanced Pathway or Generalised Pathway).

- 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 are trained on the delivery of RSE linked to professional development, appraisals and during team meetings / professional development

Teachers / 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.

- The Deputy Headteacher will oversee the review of the RSE policy and curriculum framework.
- Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

For pupils of primary school age, parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

For pupils of secondary school age, parents have the right to withdraw their children from [non-statutory/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. However, being a special school, JWS works closely with families/carers to ensure that we support each individual pupil to best learn and thrive, and ultimately to keep themselves safe when integrating with their community.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher.

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

### **Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Karen Fourie, Deputy Headteacher, through monitoring arrangements such as planning scrutinies, learning walks, curriculum pathway development, teacher appraisals and during team meetings / professional development meetings.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems and linked to individual learning plan outcomes (as agreed by parents/carers during annual reviews).

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the chair of governors.

### **Resources:**

- [Draft DFE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)
- [JWS Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Healthy Bodies – A Parent's Guide on Puberty for Girls with Disabilities](#)

- [Healthy Bodies – A Parent’s Guide on Puberty for Boys with Disabilities](#)
- Please discuss with a member of SLT if you need any bespoke support / social stories or information on how to support your child on any RSE related topics.