The Minster School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Approved by:	David Shannon	**Date:** 06/10/2026
Chair of Governors		
Last reviewed on:	Autumn 2026	
Next review due by:	Autumn 2027	

Succeeding Together

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord" Colossians 3:23

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Background:

The Minster School is a Church of England Academy school with 1639 students on role between the ages of 7 and 18.

Rationale:

From September 2020, Relationships Education will be compulsory for **all** pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for **all** pupils receiving secondary education. Health Education will also be compulsory in all schools except independent schools. The programme seeks to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils as well as preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life in a digital age. As part of the Education Act 2002/Academies Act 2010 all schools must provide a balanced and broad-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, whilst also preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Roles / Responsibilities:

Lead Governor/s: Mike Johnson/David Shannon
Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education Co-ordinator: Mrs H Feehily

Links to other relevant policies:

- Child protection policy.
- Positive student management policy
- Anti-bullying policy.
- SEND policy.
- Equality policy.
- Complaints Procedure
- Mental Health policy

Sex and Relationships Education is part of our lifelong learning about physical, moral, and emotional development. It combines an understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It is also about sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching. It is, however, about encouraging students to respect themselves and others. As a school we will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and no student will be discriminated against 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). The school will ensure that RSHE is accessible for all pupils and will comply with the SEND Code of Practice.

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of RSE and health education is to help children build healthy friendships and positive relationships in an age-appropriate way. The overall objectives of the RSE curriculum are concerned about raising awareness of attitudes and values, developing personal and social skills, and promoting knowledge and understanding. RSE covers more than biological facts and information. It endeavours to help children develop self-esteem, self-responsibility as well as the acquisition of understanding and

attitudes which prepare children to develop caring, stable, healthy relationships. Appreciation of the value of self-respect, dignity, marriage, civil partnership, and parental duty should be encouraged in all pupils together with the sensitivity to the needs of others, loyalty, and acceptance of responsibility. RSE will look at aspects of diversity in an inclusive and non-judgemental way.

"The governing body and the head teacher shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where sex education is given to any registered students at the school, it is given in such a manner as to encourage those students to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life". Section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Sex and Relationships Education at The Minster School is placed within a Christian ethos by which the school is guided. 'The Church of England encourages relationships and sex education to be placed in a context of Christian teaching and spiritual development, with sexual relationships being understood in the context of loving, faithful relationships.' (Church of England response to consultation Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education November 2018).

The response from the Church of England to the new RSE curriculum has been established in the development of this policy. Emphasis is given to the Christian ideals of love and respect as well as honesty, integrity, self-control, humility, kindness, forgiveness, and a sense of justice. It is developed equally for both boys as young men as well as girls as young women. The concept of marriage will be taught to students and appropriate time will be given to addressing the importance of resisting the pressure to have sex, why marriage is an important relationship choice and that they have the choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. Relationships will also be taught, taking into account the Church of England guidance Valuing All God's Children.

The Sex and Relationships Education curriculum is designed to meet the needs of children whatever their culture, background, or family circumstances. Activities are suitably written to enable all students to access the curriculum. For students who require a support assistant in lessons, provision will be made to ensure that one to one contact is given when appropriate. Provision is always tailored to the needs of students with specific SEND needs in negotiation with the Learning Support department and working with parents.

The prime responsibility for bringing up children lies within parents. They are the key figures in helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that come with sexual maturity.

The Sex and Relationships Education policy will be made available to parents/carers in line with the 1996 Education Act. This will be done through the school website and Relationship Education curriculum for the appropriate key stage. Parents/Carers will also be reminded when their child is due to commence studying the Sex and Relationship Education topics through communication from the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education Co-ordinator.

It is important to distinguish between the school's function of providing a general education about sexual issues and counselling and providing advice to individual pupils on these matters. Good teachers will always take an interest in their student's pastoral welfare, but this should not lead staff to 'trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities' (DfEE Circular S/94).

Special care must be taken in relation to contraception advice to pupils under sixteen for whom sexual intercourse remains illegal. Under no circumstances will students be given any form of contraceptives within school. However, they may be made aware of where they can access such products from outside of school.
The general rule must be that giving an individual student advice on such areas without parental knowledge or consent would be an inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibility.

If a teacher is approached by an individual student for specific advice, they should be directed initially to the provision provided by a nurse who will be in school on an appointment basis. Appointments for

this can be made within school via the Pastoral Support Assistants. Students will also be encouraged by the teacher in question to seek advice from their parents where possible.
Students may also be guided to the school chaplain if appropriate for counselling, guidance, to give general advice or for reference to the appropriate services.

Parental rights to withdraw

We are committed to ensuring that the education provided to pupils in relationships education / RSE is **appropriate to the age of pupils** and compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Primary settings. We recognise, in accordance with statutory guidance, that parents have the right to request for their child to be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of the statutory RSE (other than sex education in the National Curriculum as part of science), but not from relationships education at primary. Parents wishing to exercise this right must do so in writing to the Head Teacher, we will make reasonable adjustments and provide suitable work for their child at this time.

Secondary settings. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from part or all, of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE but not from relationships education. Any such request should be submitted to the Head teacher in writing. The Head teacher will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on a child; only in exceptional circumstances the school should not respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. At that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. Where a student is withdrawn appropriate work will be set.

Planning:

The Sex and Relationships Education programme has been planned to allow clear progression from as students move through the school. Planning has been done in line with the new Government Policy on RSE 2020. Lessons will be planned with the needs of all students taken into consideration and will be age appropriate in relation to the content being taught.

Content - Junior School

Through an effective and creative curriculum and by the end of primary school, pupils should know about;

- Families and people who care from them.
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe

Physical health and mental wellbeing
Pupils will be taught about the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing of the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health. Within the curriculum and by the end of primary school, pupils should know about;

- Mental wellbeing
- Physical health and fitness

- Health and prevention
- Changing adolescent body (Sex education elements are covered in Years 5&6)*

Content – Secondary school

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;

- Families
- Respectful relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- The law and legal provisions
- Mental wellbeing
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Developing bodies
- Personal safety

Included in the above is provision for sex and relationships education. It is important for children to know what the law says about sex, relationships, and young people. Teaching about the following will help pupils know what is right and wrong in law, but also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussions about all types of relationships. Pupils will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including;

- Marriage
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Contraception and STI's*
- Violence against women and girls
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes etc)
- Pornography
- Abortion
- Sexuality
- Gender
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Students at KS5 will cover issues within Faith, Life and Culture, Tutor programme and external speakers taking into consideration and building on Key Stage 4:

- Health and well being
- Relationships and sex education*
- Living in the wider world

* Topics which cover Sex Education and therefore parents. Student 16 and over may withdraw from elements of them.

Delivery

The delivery of RSE/PSHE will done in a variety of ways through a spiral curriculum, curriculum days, within RS lessons and using external providers. There are also links to other curriculum areas including: Science, PE, Food Technology and within elements of the tutor programme.

The RSE and health education curriculum is organised in the curriculum in a way which develops themes/topics, considering the age and maturation of the children. This means that topics are revisited

in greater detail as students get older. All Sex and Relationship Education will be taught in mixed gender groups within normal classroom conditions and a variety of teaching and learning styles will be used to ensure effectiveness and differentiation. Staff will discuss and establish 'ground rules' at the beginning of every lesson which will enable everybody to discuss openly and honestly without fear and embarrassment or judgement. All teachers will endeavour to create a supportive environment for all pupils.

KS2: RSE/PSHCE will be delivered in timetabled lesson blocks by the Junior department.

KS3: Sex and Relationships Education will be delivered in lesson blocks placed during Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education modules. These will be taught by the Religious Education department within Religious Education/Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education curriculum time.

KS4: Sex and Relationships Education will be delivered in individual class lessons. These will be taught by the Religious Education department.

KS5: Sex and Relationships Education will be delivered in tutors time, through standalone days and in Faith Life and culture.

Resources

A variety of resources will be used in the delivering of Sex and Relationships Education. These include the use of actual and dummy contraceptives, images of the human body, images of the effects of Sexually Transmitted Infections on the body, worksheets, card sorts and the use of specially selected internet sites. All resources can be viewed by parents/carers at request before use by their child in Sex and Relationships Education lessons.

Answering Questions

It is inevitable that controversial issues may occur as part of RSE programme and questions will be asked by students. When appropriate, staff taking the lesson will answer student's questions regarding sex and relationships. This will be done with sensitivity and at a level appropriate to age group and developmental stage. It will also be in an objective manner free from personal bias. However, should the member of staff fail to know the answer, or should the question be of a personal nature, they will recommend that the student addresses the question to an appropriate person who could give an appropriate answer.
Members of staff must not give personal advice to students regarding personal sexual activity and relationships. Instead, they will recommend trained health advisors who can fully give such advice and encourage the students to talk to their parent/carers about such issues. Students are made aware that some information cannot be held confidentially, and should understand that if certain disclosures are made, certain actions will ensue. At the same time students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

Absences

Parents will be contacted before sex and relationship sessions informing them of the content. This gives the option for students who may have been absent to go and see their Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education teacher, to make a one-to-one appointment to meet with the school health advisor to discuss any issues which they may wish to catch up on.

Staff Training

The Curriculum Team Leader Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education will co-ordinate all staff training regarding Sex and Relationships Education in co-ordination with the member of Senior Management Team responsible for staff training. The school will support the use of visitors from outside,

such as health professionals, police and voluntary sector, and other organisations to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.
All staff delivering the Sex and Relationships Education curriculum are trained as appropriate when or if the need arises

Review, Monitoring and evaluation
Reviewing of the Sex and Relationships Education policy will be carried out by the Curriculum Team Leader for PSHE and the Deputy Head Curriculum.
All policy changes or amendments to the teaching of Sex and Relationships Education will be passed through the school governors.
Students will be asked to give feedback as part of the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship department's quality assurance review and through the role of the school council.
All monitoring and evaluation of schemes of work, lessons plans, and outside speaker involvement will be carried out in line with the school's annual departmental evaluation processes. These will include evidence from students, staff and any communications made to the school regarding Sex and Relationships Education.

Child Protection
The delivery of Sex and Relationships Education fits within the school's Child Protection Policy which can be found on the school website. In line with this policy students will be made aware of issues regarding disclosure. The needs of the students are paramount and should be the primary concern for all those involved. However, it is essential that students are aware that teachers CANNOT offer unconditional confidentiality. However, students should be reassured that where in the best interest of the student, confidentiality cannot be maintained they will be informed first and supported as appropriate.
If any disclosure is made regarding child abuse the issue must be referred IMMEDIATELY to the child protection officer who is the designated person for dealing with such matters.

Teachers who are delivering Sex and Relationships Education will outline the procedure at the start of every topic and inform pupils of the sources of confidential help which are available such as the visit into school of a nurse who can be seen via appointment, GP and counselling via the school Chaplains. Young women are made aware that sanitary products are available from collection points within the school.
Within the school all-female toilets have sanitary waste bins.

Students should be informed before each Sex and Relationships Education topic from whom they can access confidential support. This information can be accessed through Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education lessons and via the nursing service provided within school.
Staff within school should have knowledge of these services and how students can access them.

This policy will be made available to all students, staff, parents/carers, governors, and the wider community via the school's website.

Staff and students will be made aware of changes to the Sex and Relationships Education policy via the school's communication systems. Parents will be informed of updates to the policy via the school newsletter signposting where the policy can be located on the school website.

All teachers who deliver the Sex and Relationships Education at the Minster School have detailed knowledge of what is covered within the Sex and Relationships Education policy as detailed above.

Last updated Autumn 2026
Next Review Autumn 2027

Deputy Head Teacher (Curriculum and Christian Distinctiveness)