



Alleyne's School Policies & Procedures

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Name of Policy	Relationships and Sex Education Policy
ISSR	Part 1: Quality of Education Provided
Reviewed by	Alleyne's Governing Board
Author/SLT	Mr G English, Deputy Head, Pastoral
Date of school review	June 2024
Date of next school review	September 2025

Policy Overview

Supporting Guidance

This Relationships and Sex Education policy applies in the Senior School, for all pupils in Years 7-13. It is written following consultation and guidance published by the Department for Education in February and June 2019 respectively. The statutory guidance is published in the document, *Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education* (June 2019). The regulations in this document are made under Sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Other relevant government guidance in the matters of relationships and sex education include, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Sep 2024); *Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment* (Part 5 of KCSIE Sep 2024); *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)* (July 2017); *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)* (Jan 2016); *Equality Act 2010 and schools* (May 2014).

Scope of the policy

This policy, applying only in the Alleyne's Senior School:

- sets out the intentions behind the coverage of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE);
- summarises the main parts of the coverage of the RSE;
- gives information about parents' right to request to withdraw their child from the lessons;
- confirms the scrutiny of the School governors;
- sets out the date of the review of the policy.

Other School policies that have relevance to this area of a pupil's education include, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Anti-bullying and Harmful Peer Relations (child-on-child abuse) Policy; Pupil Code of Conduct; Pupils' Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy; IT Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils Using School IT facilities; IT and E-safety Policy.

Intentions of RSE at Alleyn's

'Relationships and Sex Education' (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. We believe a comprehensive programme of RSE is fundamental for our students to have clear knowledge and understanding about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives students the skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships, and the skills necessary to stay safe when using social media both on and offline. RSE will be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect shown to the backgrounds and beliefs of students and parents as conveyed in the school aims, while always providing students with the knowledge they need of the law in this area.

Overarching themes

At Alleyn's we promote equality in relationships and we recognise and challenge gender inequality reflected in girls' and boys' different experiences and needs. We help students to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and we explore the impact of relationship abuse (psychological, physical, sexual or emotional) within a range of different types of relationships, and from a variety of gender and sexuality perspectives.

It is vital that all students have a clear and accurate understanding of: consent, rape culture, misogyny, sexual harassment and abuse. It is also essential that victims of sexual assault or harassment are kept safe and reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be kept safe. They should never feel that they are creating a problem by reporting an incident (Paragraph 3, DfE guidance). These topics and themes are so important that we have added them to the scheme of work for every year group in an age-appropriate way.

RSE is delivered in our PSHE programme and is consistent with the aims of that programme, which is also a major part of our aims to be a healthy school, promoting positive aspects of health in all areas of life for its pupils.

Among those aims, the most relevant to RSE are (taken from aims published in the safeguarding policy):

- developing a School ethos and environment which encourages safe and healthy lifestyle for pupils;
- covering relevant issues through Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) delivered through the PSHE programme, and supported in assemblies or other pastoral forums;
- promoting an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon lifelong health and well-being both as an individual and as part of wider modern British society.

All pupils at Alleyn's need knowledge to help inform decisions that they make as young people while at the School and as growing adults when they leave us. In RSE the pupils are able to reflect on the central importance of healthy management of relationships and their own assessment of safety and risk in sexual behaviour. Lessons in RSE challenge pupils to make independent choices, informed by their own knowledge and reflection, so that they can feel empowered to feel in control of their behaviour. Pupils are given the chance to see how personal values can be affirmed through the exercising of choice, and that at the heart of any behavioural decisions lies the importance of self-respect and respect for the wishes of others.

RSE will be provided in such a way as to encourage all the pupils to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life, while also having regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the named protected characteristics. LGBT

content is fully integrated into the School's programme, as required by the statutory guidance, and not as a standalone unit or lesson.

Delivery of RSE in the classroom

Pupils are given evidence-based materials in the lessons, and these also inform them of the legal context of behaviour in relationships and sexual matters. Lessons are delivered through a mix of teacher-led material and outside agencies, with specific expertise in RSE, coming in to deliver presentations. The staff involved in the delivery of topics encourage (at appropriate times) pupil-led discussion and questioning, to foster an atmosphere of engagement, respect and awareness of the importance of the matters under discussion. Tutors have a key role in modelling good behaviours: we teach about inclusivity and respect; sexism, misogyny, homophobia, racism, stereotyping etc. will not be tolerated. We never discuss methods or specific forms of self-harm that might potentially 'inspire' a vulnerable pupil, just as, in teaching drug education, we never talk about methods and nor should you.

By the end of their time at Alleyn's a pupil should know about the following issues, the headlines of which appear in the DfE 2021 guidance document (page 19):

- **healthy and respectful relationships;**
- **what respectful behaviour looks like;**
- **consent;**
- **stereotyping, equality;**
- **body confidence and self-esteem;**
- **that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong; and**
- **addressing cultures of sexual harassment.**

The intended outcomes of our RSE programme are to:

- To provide information about RSE issues.
- To explore what our students know and understand about RSE related issues.
- To identify and address any learning needs.
- To create a safe environment where questions and discussions relating to sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- To dispel myths and common misunderstandings associated with RSE.
- To explore a range of attitudes and beliefs relating to RSE issues and help students to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle.
- To develop respect for individuality and to encourage students to empathise and understand one another.
- To learn what characterises abusive behaviours; recognising grooming, sexual harassment, sexual and emotional abuse, violence and exploitation; how to recognise warning signs both in real life and in the virtual world; they learn how to report abuse in both forums as well as further sources of help and support.
- Pupils learn about the wide range of faith and cultural practices/beliefs pertaining to relationships and sexual activity, and to respect the role these might play in relationship values.
- To recognise the value of loving, caring and intimate relationships.
- To improve students' self-esteem.
- To appreciate the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of infants.
- To develop skills to effectively manage formative relationships and sexual situations.
- To contribute to a reduction in unwanted teenage pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.
- To know where to get help and have the confidence to seek it.
- To have an understanding of the laws relating to sexual behaviour.

These issues will be approached in an age-appropriate way and often linked with the Biology, ALP and RS curriculum.

Lessons are also constructed to deal with physical health and mental wellbeing, enabling the encouragement of self-regulation and adopting positive choices for a healthy, lifestyle with good mental health. The issue of menstruation is covered at an age appropriate stage in the curriculum.

Materials are checked by medical staff (the nurses) who also form part of the Pastoral Care Committee and the Safeguarding Committee, guiding good practice in these matters from a pupil safeguarding perspective. Teaching staff will receive RSE training on during CPD sessions (including whole-school INSED days) throughout the academic year in order to support their ability to deliver high quality and accurate lessons. It is important that staff can create a relationship of trust within RSE lessons so that students feel safe, supported and able to ask questions in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

The governors have oversight of the policy, and the Senior Deputy Head reports to the board and works closely with the Link Governor for Safeguarding, raising issues about RSE when appropriate.

The parents' right to request to withdraw their child from RSE

From: Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education: FAQs. Information from the Department for Education about the introduction of compulsory relationships education and RSE from September 2020.

"Parents will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at (primary or secondary) as we believe the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught."

Parents have a right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the RSE curriculum. Parents do not have the right to request withdrawal of a child from some elements of the statutory national curriculum which deal with the biological aspects of human development and reproduction.

The statutory guidance advises that before such a parental request is granted, that the School (normally the Senior Deputy Head) would be in conversation with the parents and, as appropriate with the child, to ensure full understanding of the child's wishes and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. A record will be kept of the process by which any request is made and granted (or not). At these meetings, the dangers of the child missing out on education being received by peers and the vulnerability of the child to missing out on the benefits of RSE will be discussed. The School will point out possible detrimental consequences of potential social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing her/his peers' version of what was covered in classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

The statutory guidance (paragraph 47) states that "Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms."

This process is applied equally to any pupils of ours with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when the School will take into consideration a particular pupil's specific needs, and take that into account when coming to a decision.

If a child is withdrawn from the sex education parts of RSE, then the School has a duty to ensure the pupil "receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal". The ultimate decision on such withdrawal arrangements is the Head's and any request will be seen by the Head.