

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (Senior School)



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I Introduction

- 1.1 The School believes that effective relationships and sex education is essential for young people to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. The aim of relationships and sex education is to help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The School recognises that to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build self-efficacy. These subjects can support children and young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support. Ofsted's recent review relating to Sexual Abuse in Schools (June 2021), and subsequent Department for Education updates incorporating advice on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children into the statutory Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance, has highlighted the essential role schools have in combating sexual harassment and sexual violence, with sufficient discussion time given over for key issues like consent and sexting.
- 1.2 The School recognises that the role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow to maturity and to form healthy relationships. The School's relationships and sex education programme is intended to complement and support the role of parents and carers in educating their children about sexuality and relationships.
- 1.3 The School recognises an aim of this policy is to help to create a culture of safety, equality and protection.

2 Scope and application

- 2.1 This relationships and sex education policy applies to the secondary age phases of the School.
- 2.2 The policy applies to all staff (including employees, fixed term, part-time, temporary and voluntary staff and helpers) and pupils of the School.

3 Regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
 - 3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
 - 3.1.2 Boarding schools: national minimum standards (Department for Education (**DfE**), 2022;
 - 3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 3.1.4 Education Act 2002;
 - 3.1.5 Children Act 1989;
 - 3.1.6 Equality Act 2010;
 - 3.1.7 Children and Families Act 2014;
 - 3.1.8 Children and Social Work Act 2017;
 - 3.1.9 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.

- 3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
- 3.2.1 it is based on statutory guidance from the DfE: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and health education (DfE, for introduction 1 September 2026);
 - 3.2.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
 - 3.2.3 Working together to safeguard children: statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2026)
 - 3.2.4 Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UK Council for Child Internet Safety, March 2024);
 - 3.2.5 Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, July 2023);
 - 3.2.6 Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education (DfE, August 2025). Using AI in education settings: support materials (updated May 2026).
 - 3.2.7 Freedom from Violence and Abuse: a cross-government strategy to build a safer society for women and girls (December 2025, updated May 2026).
- 3.3 A range of school policies, procedures, documents and resources material are relevant to this policy, and, in particular, the following policies:
- Safeguarding Policy
 - Online Safety Policy, incl. IT Acceptable Use Policies
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy
 - Wellbeing (PSHEE) Policy
 - SMSC Policy
 - SEND Policy
 - Curriculum Policy

4 Publication and availability

- 4.1 This policy is published on the School's website
- 4.2 This policy is available free of charge in hard copy on request from the Senior Deputy Head.
- 4.3 A copy of this policy is available for inspection from the Senior Deputy Head during the School day and can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

5 Definitions

- 5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:
 - 5.1.1 references to the Proprietor are references to the Board of Trustees

- 5.1.2 references to Parent or Parents means the natural or adoptive parents of the pupil (irrespective of whether they are or have ever been married, with whom the pupil lives, or whether they have contact with the pupil) as well as any person who is not the natural or adoptive parent of the pupil, but who has care of, or parental responsibility for, the pupil (e.g. legal guardian).

6 Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

- 6.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy including the approval of this policy.
- 6.2 The Proprietor is required to ensure that all those with leadership and management responsibilities at the School actively promote the well-being of pupils. The adoption of this policy is part of the Trustees' response to this duty.
- 6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SPG/LFA/RMG	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness	LFA/RMG	As required, and at least termly
Maintaining up to date records of all information created in relation to the policy and its implementation as required by the GDPR	EGO	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	SPG	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Trustees	Annually

7 Definition of relationships and sex education

- 7.1 The teaching about Relationships and Sex education forms part of Caterham School's Wellbeing programme in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum, intended to provide what children and young people need to know about how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

It comprises learning about the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children; safety in forming and maintaining relationships; the characteristics of healthy relationships, including the need for consent, and how relationships may affect physical and mental health and wellbeing. The education provided is age and developmentally appropriate and is taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents, with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law. Role modelling of healthy and positive relationships takes place in a myriad of different ways throughout every school day with positive relationships being promoted and enforced through behaviour management, rewards and sanctions.

- 7.2 Sex education, as part of relationships and sex education in secondary schools includes the teaching about intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health. It also includes what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues and using technology.

8 Curriculum content

- 8.1 By the end of secondary education, relationships and sex education will include teaching to develop knowledge on the topics specified for primary education: families and people who care; caring friendships; respectful relationships; online relationships and being safe and the areas of sex education that are contained in the science curriculum. In addition, the curriculum provision will include teaching about families; respectful relationships, including friendships; consent (including the challenging but vital topics of sexual harassment and sexual violence); issues around being online and the media; being safe and intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health; See Appendix I for a broad overview of the curriculum map

9 Equality

- 9.1 The School will ensure that it considers the makeup of the pupil body, including the gender and the age range of the pupils and take this into account in the design of the curriculum and the teaching of relationships and sex education. The School will consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics.
- 9.2 The School will be alive to issues such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes and will take positive action to build a culture of respect where such issues will not be tolerated and any incidences are identified, recorded and tackled.
- 9.3 **Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND):** relationships and sex education will be accessible for all pupils and to ensure this, teaching will be differentiated and, where appropriate, personalised. The School is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and will take this into consideration when designing and teaching these subjects.
- 9.4 **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT):** The School will ensure that the teaching of relationships and sex education is sensitive and age appropriate in content and will consider when it is appropriate to teach pupil about LGBT. This content will be fully integrated into the programmes of study rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.
- 9.5 The School is aware of its legal duties, including those pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful for the Trustees of the schools to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in prescribed circumstances, including:
- 9.5.1 in the way it provides education for pupils;

9.5.2 in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service; or

9.5.3 subjecting them to any other detriment.

9.6 The School is also aware of its duties to teach about equality issues and to ensure teaching at the School does not discriminate against pupils.

10 Curriculum delivery

- **Content of the curriculum:** RSE taught in Curriculum Wellbeing lessons includes; the nature of families, friendships & conflict resolution, puberty, menstruation & sexual intercourse, body image and relationships online in the Lower School. Puberty (emotional, physical & neurological), identity including gender identity & sexual orientation, healthy relationships, contraception & safe sex; consent and the effects of pornography are taught explicitly in the Upper School but consent in its widest form is taught and role-modelled across the school at all ages and stages. Rolling forums are delivered to the Sixth Form, some of which fit under RSE. [Appendix I: RSE curriculum map]
- Alongside the Wellbeing curriculum, RSE is also covered in some science and Philosophy & Theology lessons. A 'Reproduction' module is taught in First Year Science (fertilization, sexual intercourse, pregnancy, birth & menstruation), and again at GCSE in Fourth Year Biology lessons. In Philosophy & Theology, a 'Human Rights and Social Justice' unit is taught at GCSE which covers social justice, prejudice (in society and religions), including homophobia, gender and sexuality. RSE may also be covered in tutor time, during assemblies or at twilight information sessions in the boarding houses.
- RSE taught in Curriculum Wellbeing lessons is delivered by tutors in the Lower School and Wellbeing teachers in the Upper School. External agencies and speakers may present at Sixth Form forums.
- 'Ground rules' are set out at the start of sessions and guidance given on handling sensitive questions. Opportunities to submit anonymous questions and call on community specialists as required (Heads of Year, Senior Deputy Head, Head of Wellbeing, Health Centre staff, the Safeguarding team).
- Schemes of work are devised to ensure the content is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND. An awareness of emotional maturity and literacy levels of pupils influences schemes of work which include key terminology, visual aids and guidance on further information and support.

11 Pupil questions

11.1 The School appreciates that pupils may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond the School's curriculum. The School's approach is to ensure that teachers are confident to deal with such questions in an age-appropriate manner, recognising that children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. INSET and other training will seek to include information on how teachers can respond.

12 Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

12.1 The School will follow *Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)* and will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including about how to stay safe online. Open forums to discuss potentially sensitive issues will be made available to children. Children will also be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled.

- 12.2 Teachers will follow the School's policy on confidentiality between themselves and pupils and manage an appropriate level of confidentiality. Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained, but teachers cannot offer or promise absolute confidentiality. Teachers will follow the School's safeguarding policy if a child protection issue is raised.
- 12.3 The School will encourage pupils to talk to their parents or carers and support them to do so. The School will also inform pupils of sources of confidential help, for example, the School nurse, counsellor, GP or local young person's advice service – when pupils are signposted the limits of that confidentiality will be discussed.
- 12.4 Where the school invites external agencies to support the delivery of these subjects, the School will agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding report will be dealt with by the external visitor.

13 Parents' and carers' participation

- 13.1 The School recognises that parents and carers are the first teachers of their children and that they play a vital role in:
 - 13.1.1 teaching their children about relationships and sex;
 - 13.1.2 maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;
 - 13.1.3 helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up;
 - 13.1.4 preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.
- 13.2 The School will consult with parents and carers in the development and review of this policy and on the content of the relationship and sex education programmes. See Appendix 2.
- 13.3 The School will communicate to parents what will be taught and when in delivering relationships and sex education. Appendix 1.
- 13.4 Parents and carers of secondary age children have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of relationships and sex education at secondary age except for those parts included in the science curriculum, which cover the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction. The School will make alternative arrangements for pupils in each case so that they receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- 13.5 Following a request to withdraw in relation to a secondary age child, the Head (or appropriate senior member of staff as determined by the Head) will request a discussion with the child's parents or carers, and where appropriate, with the child. Following that discussion, except in exceptional circumstances, the School should respect the parents' or carers' request to withdraw the child, up to 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. There may be exceptional circumstances where the Head may want to take into account a pupil's specific needs arising from their special education needs or disability into account when making this decision. Any discussions and decisions will be documented by the School.
- 13.6 The parents' and carers' right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education will be communicated to them by the School through the publication of this policy. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education.

14 Consultation

- 14.1 This policy has been produced in consultation with parents and carers and seeks to take into account the views of teachers and pupils.

15 Training

- 15.1 The School ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.
- 15.2 The level and frequency of training depends on role of the individual member of staff and the need for them to complete risk assessments as part of their role.
- 15.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

16 Record keeping

- 16.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- 16.2 All matters arising from this policy involving a child protection issue will be recorded and dealt with under the school child protection policy.
- 16.3 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

17 Monitoring, evaluation and review

- 17.1 The Head of Wellbeing, the Head of Science and the Assistant Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing) will ensure that:
- 17.1.1 all schemes of work are reviewed on a regular basis to assess the content and that the content as defined within the policy is accurate and conforms to current guidance;
- 17.1.2 colleagues within their department or staff delivering this curriculum are familiar with this policy and ensure that delivery conforms to the guidelines set down in the policy and its appendices;
- 17.1.3 staff teaching any part of this programme are asked to review content and delivery. The outcomes of this evaluation are used to inform future amendments to the teaching programme, consultation with parents and any training and development needs;
- 17.1.4 any review of the programme includes an opportunity for the views of parents to be considered;
- 17.1.5 the content of all outside agencies' presentations is evaluated to ensure that it is in line with this policy.

Appendix 1 Relationships and Sex Education curriculum map

Overview of the delivery of teaching units coverage across curriculum areas.

Year group	Curriculum Wellbeing (RSE topics)	Other academic lessons (Science, Philosophy & Theology)	Other Assemblies, tutor programme etc.
First Year	• Friendships & conflict resolution • Puberty, menstruation, sexual intercourse & types of relationships, nature of families	'Reproduction' unit in Science lessons: • Fertilization • Sexual Intercourse • Foetus development, pregnancy & birth • Menstruation cycle	Tutor programme: • Transition, including feelings and friendships • 'Cats all in' sessions Assemblies: • Standalone key topics
Second Year	• Fake news including body image • Relationships online		Tutor programme: • 'Cats all in' sessions • Standalone key topics Assemblies: • Standalone key topics
Third Year	• Puberty (emotional, physical & neurological) • Identity including gender identity & sexual orientation • Healthy relationships • Contraception & safe sex • Consent • Risky behaviour • Physical Wellbeing (female physical wellbeing & masculinity)		Tutor programme: • Standalone key topics Assemblies: • Standalone key topics

Fourth Year	- Emotional literacy - Menopause education - Reproductive health - Relationships online (gaming, sextortion)	'Human Reproduction' GCSE unit in Biology: - Sexual/asexual reproduction - Male/female reproductive systems - Menstrual cycle - Fertilization - Embryo development and the role of the placenta 'Human Rights and Social Justice' GCSE unit in Philosophy & Theology: - Gender, sex and sexual orientation prejudice	Tutor programme: - Standalone key topics Assemblies: - Standalone key topics External: - RSE seminar
Fifth Year	- Consent - Effects of pornography - Risky behaviour	Revision of GCSE Biology and Philosophy and Theology topics	Tutor programme: - Standalone key topics Assemblies: - Standalone key topics
Sixth form	Wellbeing workshops - Transition to university - RSE: Risky behaviour, healthy relationships, consent and reporting issues (external)	- Sexual violence unit in Psychology 'Handmaid's tale' and other feminist literature in English	Tutor programme: Standalone key topics

Appendix 2 Parents' consultation

General principles

Teaching about relationships is nothing new for schools – in our school relationships education happens organically and also in our Wellbeing programme and in Science lessons.

We will consult with parents when developing and reviewing our policies for Relationships and Sex education, which help inform our decisions on when and how certain curriculum content is covered and how it is delivered. Our consultation will include giving the space and time for parents to input, ask questions, share concerns and for the School to decide the way forward.

We will listen to parents' views, and then make a reasonable decision as to how to proceed. What is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the School and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content or delivery.

As part of our consultation with parents we may provide examples of the resources we plan to use in lessons if requested. We may adapt our timescales, process and content to respond to the needs of the School.

How we conducted the consultation process – completed July 2021

In line with ISSRs we conducted a formal parent consultation in the establishment of this policy.

Action	Timeframe guidelines to complete draft policy, parent consultation and final policy
Draft RSE School policy (Staff and pupils may be consulted before this draft is produced)	March 2021
Whole School communication publicising parent consultation on RSE, including what consultation will constitute.	March 2021
Parent Forum to present draft School policy key points; including curriculum map for year group coverage and parents right to withdraw and seek input on the issues.	March 2021 and policy shared shortly after
Invitation to parents to make written / oral comments and pose questions	Two weeks after sharing of RSE policy setting a two week timescale to comment
Consideration of parental comments and questions by SGR	May 2021
Communication to parents of comments / concerns and questions raised and responses of how these could be addressed	Published policy on website

Consideration of school-parent working parties on specific areas of concern Consideration of a 'Parent Champion' member of staff Consideration of specific parent focus groups e.g. how to manage conversations with your children about RSE	Highlighted as part of the School response Wellbeing webinar – February 2021 ‘Adolescence and sex’ webinar, May 2021
Reconsideration of draft policy and curriculum provision in light of parent comments, with particular reference to changes that have been made as a result of consultation.	Completed by the end of Summer half term 2021
Presentation to parents of Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education Policy, the teaching units to be delivered and when, along with example resources e.g. lesson plans / books Explanation to parents of the right to withdraw, in what circumstances and how (Staff training to take place after the policy and scheme of work / curriculum map has finally be decided)	Completed before the end of Summer term 2021
Parents to be informed in writing of the teaching units proposed to be covered for their child's year group and an explanation to be given to their right to withdraw from relevant areas of the curriculum in sufficient time ahead of curriculum delivery	Done at the start of each new year/ term as appropriate
Communication to parents of the end of the process of consultation and publication of final version of the RSE policy on the school website	Completed by end of Summer Term 2021
New RSE curriculum delivery	Began September 2021, if not before
Any further significant content changes will be subject to a formal consultation with parents as specified in the ISSRs	As required (none since policy inception) In September each year, parents receive a letter with an overview of the curriculum delivery for the year ahead, a link to the updated policy and an invitation to contact the school with questions. Where pupils have sessions with external speakers, parents receive an additional letter in advance of the session. Annual parent Webinars on RSE occur the first half of each Autumn term.