



## Sex and Relationship Education Policy

The Rye Academy Trust holds ultimate responsibility for all decisions regarding the running of the individual Academies. In accordance with this responsibility, where appropriate, Rye College may refer matters covered by this policy to the Rye Academy Trust for advice or decision.

### 1. Aims

At Rye College, Sex and Relationship Education is regarded as education, about sexual matters within a values framework, focusing on responsibility within caring, committed relationships. Among the things it will concentrate on are: knowledge of the facts of human reproductive processes and behaviour; HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; contraception and abortion; and a consideration of the broader emotional and ethical dimensions of sexual attitudes. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching, although such subjects are addressed in a neutral fashion.

This policy works with our values in terms of: valuing and respecting ourselves and others; respecting healthy personal relationships, including between friends, families and others; understanding difference & preventing prejudice, & recognising the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle and keeping ourselves and others safe.

Sex and Relationship education is firmly rooted in our school's Personal, Social and Health Education programme.

### 2. Objectives

Effective Sex and Relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. Therefore our objectives are:

- To provide factual information and the development of an understanding of it;
- To develop a range of appropriate personal and social skills;
- To clarify attitudes and values.

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## 3. How we will provide a Sex and Relationship Education Programme

At Rye College we aim to create a climate in which young people are able to explore the emotional and factual aspects of Sex and Relationship education. We respect the varied beliefs and values held by our school community, however personal beliefs and attitudes will not influence the teaching of Sex and Relationship education, and a balanced view will always be presented. Our Sex and Relationship education programme will be primarily concerned with:

The specific aims of sex education should match the age and maturity of the young people involved, but underpinning all of them will be an understanding of biological, emotional, social, legal and moral aspects of sex and sexuality. In order to achieve these aims the following objectives will be considered:

- to enable young people to understand the biological facts related to human growth and development including reproduction and contraception;
- to enable young people to understand the nature of feelings and emotional experienced by themselves and others and the importance of healthy personal relationships;
- to develop an understanding of and sensitivity to different lifestyles, cultures, needs and feelings of others;
- to assist young people in making informed decisions about their sexual behaviour and the consequences of behaviour which carries risks;
- to develop an understanding of a range of values and moral issues including the value of family life in its many different contexts;
- to enable young people to know and understand the legal framework relating to sexual activity;
- to foster a range of personal skills and qualities such as communication, decision making, negotiation, assertiveness and self-esteem which will enhance the young people's ability to lead sexually fulfilling and healthy lives.
- to enable young people to identify and use sources of help and advice available within the family, school and community;
- To use appropriate teaching materials, case studies, and videos, which will respect the age, maturity and cultural background of the students. Lessons will include discussions and encourage reflection between students, so as to develop skills in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships, and making informed decisions, as well as being proactive in their learning.
- To learn in a safe and supportive environment so as to build students' self-esteem and emotional wellbeing;
- To work in mixed groups so that boys and girls are encouraged to work with and understand each other. There may, however, be opportunities for single gender sessions to explore gender-specific issues.

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## 4. Confidentiality

Teachers will act appropriately about confidential issues raised with them by students, however, they cannot guarantee students unconditional confidentiality. If, for example, they learn that a student aged under 16 years of age is having or contemplating having sexual intercourse, they should do their best to ensure that:

- the student is persuaded to talk to their parent/carer;
- any child protection issues are addressed; and
- the student has been adequately counselled and informed about contraception and advice services.

It is only in the most exceptional case that schools should be in the position of having to handle such information without parental knowledge, and where younger students were involved this would be grounds for serious concern. The Principal and Governors will monitor the frequency of such cases.

## 5. Students Requiring Additional Support

All schools have a duty to ensure that students with special educational needs are properly and appropriately included in Sex and Relationship education. Sex and Relationship education should help all students understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives.

Where some students with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than their peers, and others may be confused about what is acceptable public behaviour, then we will look to providing additional support in order to help develop their skills and reduce the risks of them being exploited, and to learn what sorts of behaviour are, and are not, acceptable.

## 6. The Role of Parents/Carers

At Rye College we seek to work in partnership with parents/carers, and recognise that they have an important role in helping their children understand Sex and Relationship education. Where there are concerns we are happy to discuss them and make reasonable adjustments to lessons. For example, for some students it is not culturally appropriate to address particular issues in a mixed class; by talking with parents/carers we hope to establish what is appropriate and acceptable for their children. Our policy on Sex and Relationship education will be communicated to parents/carers via the Rye College website.

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## **7. The Right to Withdraw Students from Lessons**

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of the school's programme of Sex and Relationship education.

Parents/carers who wish to withdraw their children from part of the Personal, Social and Health Education programme pertaining to sex education should make a written request to the Principal who will arrange to meet with them so that any misunderstandings about the nature of sex education provided by the College can be discussed.