



# Prince Albert HIGH SCHOOL



# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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## Contents

Policy statement.....	3
Definition.....	3
Equality Act 2010 .....	3
Implementation.....	3
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	4
Confidentiality and Safeguarding .....	4
Right to withdraw .....	4
Our wider community .....	4
Inclusion .....	4
Review .....	5

## Rationale

At PA High, we place a strong emphasis on preparing our students on embodying our values of integrity, excellence and service. As part of this, we believe that all our students should be given the opportunity to grow and understand themselves and each other in a safe environment free from prejudice and harm. Incumbent to this is a secure understanding of who our children are, what the world around them looks and feels like and how they can navigate all of the moving parts whilst staying true to their own identity.

## Policy statement

At PA High, we understand that relationships<sup>1</sup> come in different forms and students should understand what it means to be in a healthy, wholesome relationship where the parameters of acceptable behaviour are clearly outlined. We believe, too, that students should understand the impact positive relationships have on mental well-being. Through gaining knowledge of healthy relationships, students will be able to identify unhealthy relationships and how best to navigate those should they encounter them. Additionally, an understanding of contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to engage in any activity that makes students uncomfortable is what sits at the core of a healthy relationship. We do not encourage early sexual experimentation. We also do not endorse any sexual orientation. Our aim is to empower students to build confidence and self-esteem. We want our students to make informed choices. This is why we teach all aspects of healthy relationships including resisting pressure and, where applicable, delaying sexual activity. Our aim to broaden our students understanding of developing safe, fulfilling, and healthy sexual relationships hinges on our belief that learning about this is an entitlement for all our students. Knowledge about intimate relations and STI remains important to ensure that students are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life and allow students to ask questions in a safe, non-judgemental environment. We believe RSE is an important educational entitlement. Without it our students will not be able to fully learn how to respect themselves and others. This entitlement supports their understanding of changes during adolescence, and prepares them for healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.

## Definition

PA High defines Relationships and Sex education as per the DfE's definition and our school's ethos.

Our policy is underpinned by and compliant with:

- DfE Relationship, Sex and Health Education Guidance 2019
- Children and Social Work Bill 1 March 2017 which will come into full effect from September 2019 (making relationship education statutory)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

## Equality Act 2010

### Aims

- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical developments of students so that they may make healthy and safe life choices
- To prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life so that they may make a positive contribution to society
- To consider a range of values and moral issues, including the importance of family life.
- To help students understand the biological facts related to human growth and development, including reproduction.
- To focus on the importance of healthy relationships
- To demonstrate and encourage personal responsibility and positive and informed choice
- To encourage high self-esteem and respect for others

## Implementation

RSE is covered in our PDBW curriculum. The content is designed so that there is a level of age appropriateness as we move through the key stages. Assemblies may also have an RSE focus, where this is the case they are in addition to taught lessons and not instead of. The method of delivery for RSE, is summarised below:

KS3 -	Once a week through Citizenship
KS4-	Once a week through Citizenship
KS5 -	Once a week through Citizenship

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<sup>1</sup> a good friend, a good neighbour, colleague, a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship

The science curriculum covers biological aspects of sex education, substance abuse, contraception, healthy bodies, and puberty. The RE curriculum covers marriage and monogamy. Major world religions and their beliefs about relationships are also covered in RE. Parents must be aware that, through other curriculum subjects controversial issues may come up and, therefore, require a certain amount of discussion. As long as any discussion takes place within the context of the subject, it will not be deemed to be part of the RSE programme and, therefore, not subject to parental right of withdrawal. Staff will deal, both sensitively and professionally, with any issues which arise in the classroom. It is anticipated that professionals from outside our Trust will be involved in teaching the RSE programme at certain times. Every visitor or professional speaker involved in this programme will be made aware of the RSE policy of the school.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

At PA High, we hold the same high expectations of the quality of students' work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas. Our curriculum builds upon the knowledge children have previously acquired, including in other subjects. This policy will be reviewed annually and take on the views of parents, staff, students, and the academy commit, as well as any further policy developments from the DfE. A member of the Senior Leadership Team has strategic oversight for the PDBW and therefore RSE also. This member of staff works closely with the Lead for PDBW. Together, they collaborate with other key members of staff (class teachers, form tutors / advisors, pastoral leads, the Trust's Director for Safeguarding and senior staff) to ensure the curriculum meets the needs for our students.

## **Confidentiality and Safeguarding**

Teachers understand that confidentiality during RSE lessons must be acknowledged so that young people feel that they are in a 'safe space' where they can ask questions. Staff understand, however, the need to report immediately (in line with the Safeguarding policy) any concerns such as students displaying age-inappropriate knowledge or interest in sex or expressing views that may indicate a lack of respect for the safety and self-esteem of others.

## **Right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to request for their child to be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education lessons delivered in school, other than when it is part of the science curriculum. If a parent chooses to withdraw their child, then parents will need to make a request in writing to the Head of School, stating their views and reasons for the request, demonstrating how they will deliver sex education to their child at home. The Head of School will then meet with parents to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and outline any possible detrimental effects that the withdrawal may have on the child. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will 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. Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationship Education.

## **Our wider community**

Our work and relationships with our parents and the wider community is vital. These effective partnerships allow us to reach our collective mission. We are in full agreement with the DfE who describe parents/carers as the first educators of their children. 'They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.' Our job is to continue to work in collaboration with our parents. At PA High we welcome feedback from parents on any area of our curriculum, including the PSHE and RSE curriculum. The member of staff with overall responsibility for PSHE is available to meet with parents to discuss any questions or share overviews on certain topics.

## **Inclusion**

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, PA High ensures that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. We make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice, when planning for these subjects. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised is the starting point. Additionally, meetings with parents of pupils who are vulnerable, are key. Our aim is to protect our vulnerable students from all types of dangers and make them aware of the avenues of support in bid to develop their mental health and self-esteem. That is central to our inclusive approach. The school is deeply sensitivity to the religions and beliefs of the school community and has created this policy with that in mind. We continue to take feedback on the provision and resources used to deliver the RSE curriculum. The policy will be reviewed in September 2022 and take the view of parents, local committee members and staff into consideration.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments or in response to changes in guidance.