



RMS FOR GIRLS

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

School update	
Responsible for review of policy	Deputy Head Pastoral/Head
Last school update	January 2025
Governor Sub-Committee approval	
Sub Committee to review and approve	Pastoral
Review Period	3 years
Last Sub- Committee review date	28 January 2025
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Related policies	Safeguarding policies
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What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development, and the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships and marriage for family life and respect, love and care.

It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

There are three key elements:

- attitudes and values
- personal and social skills
- knowledge and understanding

Relationships and Sex Framework

Relationships and Sex Education covers more than biological facts and information, it aims to help young people develop self-esteem, self-responsibility as well as the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare pupils to develop caring, stable relationships. Appreciation of the value of self respect, dignity, marriage and parental duty should be encouraged in all pupils, together with sensitivity towards the needs of others, loyalty and acceptance of responsibility.

Pupils should be given the opportunity to recognise the significance of stable relationships ,including marriage, as key building blocks of their community and wider society. They should also gain an understanding of human sexuality including safe sexual activity r and understand the need to respect themselves and others.

Pupils should also be given appropriate advice on outside agencies that can provide advice on sexual health.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health education (England) Regulations 2019 come into force in September 2020 as a statutory requirement for all schools in England to provide relationships and sex education as part of Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Relationships and Sex Education at RMS

The topics in the framework are developed gradually throughout the year as part of the Life Skills programme at Key Stages 3 & 4. The Cadogan House Life Skills Schemes of Work covers RSE at KS2.

A brief outline of Sex and Relationship Education within the Life Skills curriculum can be found in Appendix 1. In Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.

The Guidance also sets out how RSE is taught through National Curriculum Science (see Appendix 1)

Unit Aims and Objectives

- to develop skills in making informed decisions and in combating exploitation and peer pressure.
- to build self-esteem and encourage better communication about sexual issues, relating to both girls and boys
- to promote respect for themselves and others.
- to develop an understanding and recognition of sexual violence and sexual harassment
- to learn and appreciate the values of stable relationships, including family, parenthood, and romantic commitments. to enable pupils to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications of certain types of behaviour and to accept that all parties must behave responsibly in sexual matters.
- to give pupils a clear understanding of Laws surrounding underage sexual activity and resisting pressure.
- to provide information about different types of contraception, safe sex and how they can access local resources for further advice.
- to promote responsible behaviour and the acceptance of one's actions in relation to sexual activity.

- to link relationships and sex education with issues of peer pressure and other risk taking behaviours, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol.
- to raise awareness of outside influences such as the media on issues related to gender, stereotypes and sex and relationships.
- to ensure that pupils understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.

Curriculum Programme

Sensitive Issues

Teachers of Relationships and Sex Education will have to deal with a number of sensitive issues during lessons, these include

1. Puberty – including knowledge of changes in both boys and girls.
2. Menstruation – pupils need to feel prepared and supported. Pupils are also made aware of where they can seek support within the school if they are menstruating.
3. Contraception – is not to be given individually or personally, but only to a group with reference to the legal situation and the aspect of sexually transmitted infections. All pupils under 16 will be encouraged to speak to their parents in the first instance.
4. Abortion – pupils need to be aware of moral and personal dilemmas involved in abortion and know how to access a relevant agency if necessary.
5. Safer Sex and HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) – prevention, diagnosis and treatment.
6. Sexuality and Sexual Orientation – pupils need to be aware of the personal dilemmas and discrimination that can occur around sexuality and sexual orientation.
7. Consent, Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation and Child Sexual Exploitation
8. Pornography and youth produced sexual images
9. Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Teachers responsible for Relationships and Sex Education will be given extra support and training in order to be able to deal with these issues confidently in the classroom and to be able to deal with individual questions. Teachers work within the framework and not to their personal belief systems.

All teachers have a common understanding of confidentiality issues with specific reference to the School's confidentiality policy and what to do if pupils confide in them.

Teaching Strategies

It is essential that pupils develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about relationships and sex. There are a number of teaching strategies that can help the effective delivery of the RSE programme.

1. Ground Rules, every form class will discuss a set of ground rules which will be adhered to by all members of the class during RSE lessons, these could include guidelines such as: no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question, no one will be forced to take part in a discussion, and meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
2. Distancing Techniques, teachers will be trained on how to depersonalise discussions. For example role-play will be used to allow pupils to 'act out' situations and case studies will be examined.
3. Dealing with questions, teachers will set clear guidelines about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. The teacher can use reminders of the ground rules or if deemed inappropriate, the teacher will acknowledge the question and promise to attend to it later.
4. Discussion will be used to enable pupils to draw on previous knowledge to develop greater understanding, consider their beliefs and attitudes about different topics and reflect on their learning.
5. Reflection, pupils will reflect in topics discussed by completing plenary activities and homework tasks.

Inappropriate language will not be used, nor explicit material that is not related directly to the lesson.

Pupils will be protected from inappropriate material, having regard to their age, readiness, religion and cultural background.

RMS ensures that pupils are protected from accessing inappropriate material on the Internet. Only appropriate teaching materials that meet legal requirements will be used.

Pupils are made aware of places they can go for further information, support and advice i.e. Medical Centre, Life Skills Notice board, referenced books and websites.

Assessment Opportunities

Pupils should complete a variety of plenary activities during the RSE unit and complete an informal assessment at the end of the unit, where they should recall ideas explored during lessons and reflect on their attitudes towards them.

Differentiation and Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Whilst some pupils may have a fairly broad knowledge regarding SRE, there are those who have little or no knowledge at all. Teachers need to be sensitive to this issue and lessons are planned to take account of the pupil's age, culture, experience and maturity. The needs of the pupils with SEN are taken into account by the teacher who may need to provide different resources, activities or specific support to some pupils. Where pupils' Learning Support Reviews identify targets relating to personal development, the teacher will ensure that opportunities are planned to support pupils in achieving these.

Staff Development

The School has an on-going programme for professional development. Additional support and Continued Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for teachers involved in RSE will be made available through existing CPD and training strategies.

Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing Sex and Relationships Education

The Head has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation. The Life Skills Co-ordinator, pupils, staff, parents and governors are consulted and the programme and policy are modified where appropriate.

There is on-going monitoring and evaluation of the programme, teaching methodologies and learning outcomes to ensure that aims needs are met. The policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually to identify whether or not the aims are being met. Relationships and Sex Education and the policy are reviewed in line with current Government guidelines

Working with Parents

This policy has been developed in conjunction with consulting with parents and pupils to ensure it meets the needs of the RMS community. Examples of resources used have been provided to parents. A RSE curriculum information and consultation evening is held every three years to gain parent/carers input and to share the ways we work within government requirements and guidance. The last consultation with parents was on Tuesday 5 October 2021. Immediate feedback was received with a parental concern raised that RMS was placing undue bias towards same sex and transgender relationships. A wider whole school online survey was circulated and during the second half of the Michaelmas term, a review of the RSE programme was undertaken following the results of the survey alongside pupils' opinions with changes being implemented from January 2022. Appendix 2 summarises the results of the survey, changes made and the communication to parents.

Parents should be well informed of the current Relationships and Sex Education programme. They have the right to withdraw their child from sex education programme, but not from relationships education, which from 2020 is a statutory requirement or from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction that is part of the National Curriculum in Science. As the Life Skills course emphasises

aspects of RSE within a framework of personal development, we hope parents will realise the benefits to be gained by pupils from this type of programme and not request withdrawal, without discussing it with the school. Should a parent wish to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education programme, they should contact the Head of the Senior School or Deputy Head Pastoral. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, RMS will respect a parental 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, RMS will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

With the support of outside agencies, the School will also provide Relationships and Sex Education evening for parents as part of the Life Skills programme. The aim of these evening is to provide parents with knowledge and support about young people and their changing relationships, information about gender identity, contraception, sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancy. Parents will be able to ask questions and develop ways in which they can support their daughter in her relationships and to make reasoned and informed choices about sexual activity.

Working with the Wider Community

The School aims to work effectively in partnership with parents and other members of the community, to provide effective Relationships and Sex Education. The use of outside agencies such as the Community Health Nurses and the Family Planning Association?? complements what is being delivered in Relationships and Sex Education lessons.

Visitors and staff from a range of agencies support and enhance the Relationships and Sex programme. The use of visitors is a part of a planned and integrated approach to Relationships and Sex Education. Visitors are always made aware of the School's ethos, values and approach to Relationships and Sex. All visitors are DBS checked. Parents/carers will be informed of such visits.

Confidentiality Policy

The School has a confidentiality policy.

The pupil should always be encouraged to talk to her parents or guardians and know that staff will support her in this. The pupil also needs to know that they will be told first, and supported appropriately, if the information has to be passed on.

The same applies to the School Counsellor who communicates with the Deputy Head Pastoral about individual pupil who, in their professional opinion, are at risk.

Sometimes disclosures by pupils may take place in an inappropriate place or at an inappropriate time. If this happens the member of staff will attempt to talk to the pupil again individually before the end of the day and communicate concerns in alignment with the School's safeguarding procedures.

Staff are made aware that effective relationship and sex education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to the disclosure of a safeguarding issue and the appropriate reporting procedures should then be followed.

It is only in exceptional circumstances that information would be handled without parental knowledge.

Pupils under 16 may wish to obtain a guarantee of confidentiality because they wish to disclose that they are having sex or contemplating it. They should be made fully aware that sexual activity below the age of 16 constitutes abuse and that confidentiality cannot be given. Pupils should be directed to local confidential medical services if they do not wish to visit the Health Centre in school.

Safeguarding

The school has a Safeguarding Policy which parents can access online. On disclosures of concerns will be dealt with accordingly. The DSL will be informed immediately and Hertfordshire Social Services procedures will be followed.

	<u>Healthy and happy friendships »</u>	<u>Similarities and differences »</u>	<u>Caring and responsibility »</u>	<u>Families and committed relationship s »</u>	<u>Healthy bodies, healthy minds »</u>	<u>Coping with change »</u>
Y1	Forming friendships and how kind or unkind behaviours impact other people.	Similarities and differences between people and how to respect and celebrate these.	Identifying who our special people are and how they keep us safe.	What a family is (including difference and diversity between families), and why families are important and special.	Our bodies and the amazing things they can do. Learning the correct names for different body parts.	Growing from young to old and how we have changed since we were born.
Y2	Understanding what makes a happy friendship. Recognising personal boundaries and safe/unsafe situations.	Exploring different strengths and abilities. Understanding and challenging stereotypes.	The different communities and groups we belong to and how we help and support one another within these.	The different people in our families, and how families vary.	Ways to stay healthy, including safe and unsafe use of household products and medicines.	Exploring how our bodies and needs change as we grow older. Aspirations and goal setting.
Y3	Being a good friend and respecting personal space. Strategies for resilience.	Respecting and valuing differences. Shared values of communities.	Our responsibilities and ways we can care and show respect for others.	Different types of committed relationships and the basic characteristics of these.	Maintaining physical and mental wellbeing, through healthy eating, sleep and keeping clean.	Coping with feelings around the changes in our lives.
Y4	Solving friendship difficulties. How to act if someone invades your privacy or personal boundaries.	Identity and diversity. Seeing different perspectives and not making judgements based on appearance.	Rights and responsibilities within families and wider society, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.	The range of relationships we experience in our everyday lives. How to understand the differences between types of relationships we encounter.	Influences on our health and wellbeing, including friends, family and media, and awareness of how these can affect personal health choices.	How our bodies change as we enter puberty, including hygiene needs and menstruation.

Y5	Identity and peer pressure off- and online. Positive emotional health and wellbeing.	Celebrating strengths, setting goals and keeping ourselves safe online.	How our care needs change and the effects of loneliness and isolation. Ways in which we can show care in the community.	The characteristics of healthy, positive and committed relationships, and how these develop as people grow older.	Our unique bodies and self-acceptance – valuing our bodies and minds; lifestyle habits (including alcohol, tobacco and drugs) and their effects on wellbeing.	How puberty changes can affect our emotions and ways to manage this; questions about puberty and change.
Y6	How relationships evolve as we grow, including when transitioning to secondary school. How to cope with a wider range of emotions.	Identity and behaviour online and offline. Reflecting on how people feel when they don't 'fit in'.	How we can take more responsibility for self-care and who cares for us as we grow older, including at secondary school.	Human reproduction, including different ways to start a family. *	Being the healthiest me: ongoing self-care of bodies and minds, including ways to prevent and manage mental ill-health.	Ways to manage the increasing responsibilities and emotional effects of life changes.

Relationships and Sex Education at RMS (Key Stages 3, 4, 5)

The Life Skills (PSHCE) programme covers many topics relevant to the pupils' own physical and emotional development, including relationships and sex education. The programme of study focuses on progressive development of knowledge and decision-making skills on a range of relationship values and issues.

Year 7

Puberty (Girls)

Puberty (Menstruation)

Puberty (Boys)

Coping with change (Physical)

What makes a healthy relationship?

Relationships - conflict resolution

Bullying and on-line safety

Under the Citizenship category, pupils also explore the British Values and Female Genital Mutilation

Year 8

Relationships with family

Relationships – resolving conflict

Romantic relationships

Periods

Periods – practicalities

Coping with emotional changes

On-line safety and sexting

Year 9

What is Love? Sex and Sexuality (including LGBT)

Changing Relationships and Sexual Feelings

Sexual Exploitation and on-line sexual harassment

Risks of Early Sexual Behaviour (including Sexting) - Consent and STIs

Contraception – Condoms and dams

Year 10

Consent and Consequences of sexual decisions

Managing Risk including 'date rape' & Saying 'No'

Types of Contraception

STIs, Understanding HIV/AIDS, Seeking Advice

Sex and the media

Coercion and managing boundaries

Equality and women

Year 11

Sexual Identity and Discrimination Unhealthy Relationships

Harassment

Teenage Pregnancy: Parental Roles and Responsibilities

Abortion (Ethics)

Pornography and representation on screen

By the end of Y11, pupils will have been taught:

1. Families

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.

- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

2. Respectful Relationships including Friendships

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

3. On-line and Media

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- the impact of viewing harmful content.
- that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

4. Being Safe

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. The theme of sexual violence and sexual harassment are revisited in an appropriate age specific manner throughout Y7-11
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).

5. Intimate and Sexual Relationships Including Sexual Health

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.

- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause. Is this covered in sixth? perhaps needed to be added to sensitive content list
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy, and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. is this covered in sixth? perhaps needs to be added to sensitive content list?
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Key Stage 5

The Sixth Form Lifeskills programme has a dedicated time allocated to it each week and is a fundamental part of preparing the pupils for life beyond RMS programme in the Sixth Form. Sex and relationships sessions build on the content delivered through years 7-11, revisiting many of the same topics but at a level more appropriate for older pupils and aiming to support the development of our pupils so that they are fully equipped and confident to tackle the challenges that life in the wider world may bring. Lifeskills in the sixth form is designed to be proactive, but also responsive and reactive to current needs of pupils, as determined by them or staff. The flexibility of the Lecture series allows for this, giving a longer period of time for talks. The majority of RSE is delivered by external companies, allowing the pupils greater freedom to ask questions and hear from specialists.

Topics covered across Year 12-13

- Sexual health
- Contraception
- LGBTQ+ relationships
- Gender
- Consent
- Healthy relationships
- Porn
- Fertility for women

National Curriculum Science - should we check this?

Key Stage 1

- That animals including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- To recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans
- That humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults
- To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity

Key Stage 2

- That the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction
- About the main stages of the human life cycle

Key Stage 3

- That fertilisation in humans. Is the fusion of a male and a female cell
- About the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
- About the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation

- How the foetus develops in the uterus
- How the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health

Key Stage 4

- The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones
- Some medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility
- The defence mechanisms of the body
- How sex is determined in humans

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Relationships and Sex Health Education (RSE) consultation was launched on 5th October 2021, which was followed by a period of consultation lasting one month. The purpose of the consultation was to consult with parents and carers and share with you our curriculum approach at RMS in line with the statutory guidelines for RSE.

We would like to thank all parents and carers who took the time to submit responses and complete the questionnaire. In total, we had 11 responses from families with pupils across all year groups giving us valuable information about the thoughts and concerns of parents and carers. Overall, the responses gathered were very encouraging and constructive in helping to shape our curriculum going forwards.

Below aims to address the concerns raised by parents and the school's response:

Seems to be a heavy focus on the teaching of female genital mutilation (FGM). Is it necessary? Concerns about FGM being taught to 11 year olds.

Teaching about FGM is compulsory in secondary school. The statutory [RSE guidance](#) (page 26, section 79) from the DfE states that:

- 'Schools should address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM).
- They should also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM.
- As well as addressing this in the context of the law, pupils may also need support 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 strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk.
- Schools should also be mindful that for pupils who are or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the school may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.'

As an aside from being compulsory in secondary schools, there are also other important reasons why we teach about FGM as indicated by the PSCHE Association guidance:

'Whilst it is adults' responsibility to protect children from harm, if children and young people are taught about FGM, there is more chance they will report it. It is therefore important that pupils understand what it is and that it is illegal; know how to, and feel able to, tell a responsible adult should they, or someone they know, be at risk of FGM. The charity 'Forward' predicts that 60,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM in the UK; 137,000 girls and women are living with the consequences of FGM in the UK and 200 million have undergone FGM worldwide.' (www.forwarduk.org.uk, 2018-19)

In most places, where FGM is carried out, it is done between infancy and 15 years old. Prevention and awareness around FGM is very much key, and there is a bigger focus on equipping pupils with the skills that will keep them and others safe. Learning the vocabulary, language, strategies and skills to manage 'critical moments' in relation to FGM is essential. Pupils learning about FGM are not taught about graphic stories, descriptions or accounts of the process or the aftermath, or shown graphic images of the tools used to perform FGM.

At RMS, pupils are taught about FGM in the Trinity term of year 7 as part of the Citizenship module. We appreciate that the teaching of FGM needs to be approached sensitively with pupils and that teachers need to be comfortable delivering the material. Teachers receive training on the teaching of FGM. The resources used are approved by the PSHCE Association. For more information on the resources we use, please see:

- [Teacher Guidance](#)
- [Lesson Plan](#)
- [Student Lesson](#)
- [Resource 1](#)
- [Resource 2](#) - Myth Busting
- [Resource 3](#) - Myth Busting Answers

There should be more focus on teenage pupils learning to become comfortable in their own skin and work on body image and self-acceptance.

Body image is already addressed in the wider Lifeskills programme under the 'Health' section. The RSE consultation purely focussed on relationships and sex education.

Concerns raised that the curriculum is too advanced for some pupils due to different maturity levels. For example, more intimate topics and contraception should be introduced later.

We appreciate that pupils develop in maturity at different rates. We encourage pupils to take time-out during sections of the lesson if they feel highly uncomfortable. We take a proactive, rather than reactive approach, in helping prepare pupils for the next stage. From the 11 responses, parents commented on the importance of teaching about consent, dealing with pressure (through role-play), safe sex, and encouraging a positive, healthy emotional relationship before a physical one. All these align with our curriculum in Y9 and Y10.

Awareness of menopause, breast awareness and the importance of investing in your health during in teenage years (bone health, fitness etc.)

We agree that awareness of menopause should be introduced to pupils and have adapted our sixth form Lifeskills programme to include this. Breast awareness is covered in the sixth form Lifeskills programme already, but we will look to include this in the 'Health' module in year 11. Investing in health in teenage years is already covered in our health module programme. In Y8, for example, they recognise the value of exercise for the health of both body and mind, as well as looking at healthy eating. Bone health is covered in the science curriculum but we will look to emphasise this in the Lifeskills programme as well.

Parents would like to know what is taught when as it would help to have a follow-up conversation at home.

The medium-term plans for each year group are already available on My School Portal (MSP) and this indicates the term in which topics are covered. To improve this, we will make our schedules available through MSP, so parents can see an overview of topics for each week.

Talking early about the impact of social media and the damages to mental health due to bullying over the internet and being influenced by what is online vs. what is the reality of an image e.g. airbrushed images. How do pupils decide which social media prescience to join and when to leave?

This is covered in our wider Lifeskills provision and through other whole-school initiatives. They cover online media and social etiquette. We have recently launched [Anti-bullying Ambassadors](#) which is an initiative run by the Diana Award. [Girls on Board](#) is also another programme that we follow. For some years now, we have appointed and trained pupil Digital Leaders (run by Childnet) to raise awareness about the impacts of social media and empower them to educate their peers about staying safe online. They run sessions in year assemblies and form times. For example, they do sessions on fake news and help pupils think critically about what they see online. Pupils reflect on what they post online and how it can be perceived. There is structured online training and pupils receive support from Childnet's expert team. For more information about the programme, please visit the [Childnet website](#). Childnet has also run a session for RMS parents and carers. Details of the recording are published in the parent newsletter and also available here:

Please click [here](#) to view the Childnet Online Safety Session for parents and carers

Available until 15th December 2021

Access Passcode: 4cKS?92? Is this still available?

Thank you once again for your feedback. Finally, we would like to offer parents and carers the opportunity to experience a RSE lesson. If you are interested, please let me know and should there be enough interest, I will organise this and let interested parents know the date and time in due course.

With best wishes,
Head of Lifeskills

(sent to parents 25 April 2025)

Relationship and Sex Education policy and update

Dear Parents and Carers

The Relationships and Sex Health Education (RSE) consultation was held during the second half of the Hilary term 2025. The purpose of the consultation was to consult with parents and carers and share with you our curriculum approach at RMS in line with the statutory guidelines for RSE.

We would like to thank all parents and carers who took the time to submit responses and complete the questionnaire. In total, we had 4 responses from families with pupils across all year groups giving us valuable information about the thoughts and concerns of parents and carers. The responses were constructive in helping to shape our curriculum going forwards and provided an opportunity for us to reflect on our practice. We have responded individually to those families who submitted responses to give more further information/explanations around their specific concerns.

In summary, the feedback, concerns and suggestions raised were:

Female Genital Mutilation

This is certainly an area which we grapple with given the content and age of the pupils, however, given the young age at which this can occur, we feel it is important that pupils are educated on this at an early opportunity albeit in an age appropriate manner. As an aside from being compulsory in secondary schools, there are also other important reasons why we teach about FGM as indicated by the PSHE Association and NHS guidance which makes the point that as FGM is usually carried out to girls under the age of 15, it makes no sense to wait to teach this until Y9. Whilst it is adults' responsibility to protect children from harm, if children and young people are taught about FGM, there is more chance they will report it. The charity 'Forward' predicts that 60,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM in the UK; 137,000 girls and women are living with the consequences of FGM in the UK and 200 million have undergone FGM worldwide.' Forward

At RMS, pupils are taught about FGM in the Trinity term of Y7. We appreciate that the teaching of FGM needs to be approached sensitively with pupils and that teachers need to be comfortable delivering the material. Teachers receive training on the teaching of FGM. The resources used are approved by the PSHE Association. Prevention and awareness around FGM is very much key, and there is a bigger focus on equipping pupils with the skills that will keep them and others safe. Learning the vocabulary, language, strategies and skills to manage 'critical moments' in relation to FGM is essential. Pupils learning about FGM are not taught about graphic stories, descriptions or accounts of the process or the aftermath, or shown graphic images of the tools used to perform FGM.

Y7 and LGBTQ+

A parent felt that Y7 was too young to be taught about LGBTQ+ relationships. We have clarified that the education in Y7 is around healthy relationships rather than sexual ones.

More teaching around misogyny, Incel and toxic masculinity

Since launching the draft policy and feedback, there has been much in the media surrounding the Netflix series 'Adolescence' and this is an area to be developed over the remainder of this academic year and into the next. We are mindful not to have a knee jerk response to the current focus on this topic and take a measured, thoughtful and balanced approach to this topic.

Pornography

One parent felt that the education surrounding Pornography should be earlier than Y11. We are minded to agree with this and will look at introducing the topic earlier and specifically surrounding how pupils should respond should they inadvertently view or receive such images.

A parent also felt that there should be more education of parents surrounding smartphones generally at the start of Y7. Whilst we do cover this in the Y7 Parent Information Evening events and online safety updates are sent to parents, there is always more that can be undertaken in this respect.

Gender ideology

A parent raised concerns regarding the teaching of gender ideology and we have liaised with the parent directly with regards to this point as we felt there was a misunderstanding with regards to this. At RMS we follow all the current guidelines and err on the side of caution. Since launching of the draft policy, there has been the recent High Court Judgement with regards to gender and it may well be that this is reflected, in due course, in changes to the government guidance with regards to the relationships and sex education which we will embed in our policies and teaching. The government guidance has been subject to a general review since 2024 but has not, as yet, been finalised.

Next steps

- This communication forms part of the policy (Appendix 3) and the policy will be considered by the governors on the 29th April and if approved, the policy will then be finalised.
- We will work towards embedding any changes to the RSE education programme.
- Previously, we have offered parents an opportunity to participate in a typical RSE lesson and should you wish to undertake this, please let us know and if there is sufficient interest, we can put this in place

Whilst we have undergone a formal consultation process, please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any queries, concerns or suggestions.

Kind regards

Alison Davies
Deputy Head Pastoral