

TASIS



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

Relationships & Sex Policy

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Document

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. For purposes of this document, the term “Board of Directors” is deemed to have the same meaning as “Proprietor” in accordance with the ISSR, and is used interchangeably.
- 1.2. Legal Status:
 - a. Part 2, paragraph 5 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2015;
 - b. The Sex and Relationships Education Framework (2005);
 - c. The SRE toolkit (Sex Education Forum/2008);
 - d. The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Programme (SEAL).
- 1.3. Related documents:
 - a. Personal, Social, Health Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship;
 - b. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development;
 - c. Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy;
 - d. Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

2. What Is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

- 2.1. RSE is life-long learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care for family life.
- 2.2. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.
- 2.3. Effective Relation and Sex education does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- 2.4. It enables young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. It builds up knowledge and skills which are particularly important today because of the many different and conflicting pressures on young people.

3. Principles and Values

- 3.1. In addition, TASIS believes that RSE should:
 - a. be an integral part of the life-long learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life;
 - b. be an entitlement for all young people;
 - c. encourage each student to contribute to our community and aim to support each other as they grow and learn;

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- d. be set within the wider TASIS value system and support family commitment, love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness;
- e. encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views;
- f. embrace the important values of love, respect and care for each other;
- g. generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment;
- h. recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them about the way these topics are delivered at TASIS. We recognise that the wider community has much to offer and aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

4. Relationships and Sex Education at TASIS has three main elements

4.1. Attitudes and Values

- a. learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- b. learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships and marriage
- c. learning about the nurture of children
- d. learning the value of respect, love and care
- e. exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- f. developing critical thinking as part of decision-making
- g. challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour

4.2. Personal and Social Skills

- a. learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- b. developing self-respect and empathy for others
- c. learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice
- d. developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- e. managing conflict

4.3. Knowledge and Understanding

- a. learning and understanding, at appropriate stages, physical development
- b. understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- c. learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay

5. Aims and Objectives

- 5.1. The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical,

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religious and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our RSE programme delivered in a number of ways, aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- a. develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;
- b. have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others;
- c. have respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want;
- d. understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly regarding sexual and pastoral relationships;
- e. avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected relationships;
- f. communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues;
- g. develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality;
- h. challenge sexism and prejudice and promote equality and diversity;
- i. understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity;
- j. understand the reasons for having protected sex
- k. have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV;
- l. be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary;
- m. know how the law applies to sexual relationships

6. Content

- 6.1. In each Division, students learn at the appropriate level how good relationships can promote mental well-being, how to manage their feelings positively and how to manage changing relationships.
- 6.2. Materials used reflect ongoing consultation with parents and professional advisers. Age and cultural backgrounds of the students are always regarded in relation to images used.

7. Organisation

- 7.1. RSE is delivered by school nurses who have the experience and skills to deliver sensitive material to mixed ability, co-educational groups of students as part of our PSHEE program which take place each term.
- 7.2. Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside TASIS may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE in TASIS.
- 7.3. The RSE programme, outside the Science Schemes of Work where certain topics are dealt with, is conducted using a variety of informal activities which have been built into the programme.

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- 7.4. A set of ground rules will help teachers create a safe environment, in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from students.
- 7.5. All staff involved in the teaching of RSE will receive training on the importance of ground rules and how to set them.
- 7.6. TASIS believes in the importance of training for staff delivering RSE. Staff are encouraged to identify appropriate training and support to help them deliver effective RSE.
- 7.7. The following are protocols for discussion based lessons with students:
 - a. students must be made aware that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality;
 - b. no one (teacher nor student) will have to answer a personal question;
 - c. no one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
 - d. meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way;
 - e. when answering a specific question which involves information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time;
 - f. Where a member of staff is concerned that a safeguarding or child protection issue is arising, it is his/her responsibility to follow the School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

8. Specific Issues within RSE

- 8.1. **Withdrawal:** Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RSE provided at TASIS. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right will be invited to explore any concerns and discuss the impact that withdrawal may have on their child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RSE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.
- 8.2. **Confidentiality:** As a general rule a student's confidentiality will be respected by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the student is at risk or in danger, she/he must talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who may confer with Children's Services before any decision is made. The student concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The student will be supported throughout the process.
- 8.3. **Child Protection:** TASIS has a separate Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. Effective RSE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns by informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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- 8.4. **Disclosures:** If a member of staff learns that an under 16 year old is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity TASIS will ensure that:
- The young person is encouraged to talk to their parent/carer;
 - Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed;
 - The young person receives adequate counselling and information.
- 8.5. **Controversial and Sensitive Issues:** Members of staff are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, whilst personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that students are able to form their own informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.
- 8.6. **Dealing with Questions:** Students' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the student concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. TASIS believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the DSL if they are concerned.
- 8.7. **Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation:** TASIS believes that RSE should meet the needs of all students regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively.
- 8.8. **Equal Opportunities and inclusion in Relationships and Sex Education:** The RSE curriculum has been developed to take into account the diversity of the school population and to meet the needs of the students. The teaching materials we use are regularly reviewed to ensure their suitability. All RSE will be inclusive and meet the needs of all young people, recognising that issues such as sexuality, disability, ethnicity and faith affect attitudes towards RSE.

9. Visitors contributing to Relationships and Sex Education

- 9.1. The wider community has much to offer, and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals and other mentors or advisors.
- 9.2. A school nurse provides a drop-in clinic for students. This service is advertised throughout TASIS, parents may attend this service with their child by appointment.
- 9.3. The School also provides an independent listener for boarding students.
- 9.4. From time to time, as part of a planned module of work, the nurse and/or local experts will be invited to speak on issues relating to RSE.
- 9.5. All School associate health and other professional and visitors will be asked to conform to the following:

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- a. visitors contributing to RSE will do so at the invitation of TASIS and will be qualified to make an appropriate contribution;
- b. visitors must agree with the aims of the School in delivering its policy on RSE;
- c. when in class, visitors will be supervised by a teacher, who will be present at all times;
- d. although bound by their own code of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, visitors will follow the TASIS Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and TASIS Code of Conduct if a disclosure occurs within the classroom setting;
- e. visitors will know and understand where their contribution fits into the TASIS's programme or RSE and Personal Development.