



CHELTENHAM
COLLEGE



CHELTENHAM COLLEGE
PREPARATORY
SCHOOL

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

For the purposes of clarity the following terms will be used throughout the policy:-

'Cheltenham College' refers to Cheltenham College Senior School *and* Cheltenham College Preparatory School (including Cheltenham College Nursery School)

'College' refers to Cheltenham College Senior School

'Cheltenham Prep' refers to Cheltenham College Preparatory School

'Kingfishers' refers to Cheltenham College Nursery School / EYFS

1. Introduction

Cheltenham College is committed to providing high quality relationships and sex education to children and young people in order to prepare them for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of growing up and becoming adults. Relationships and sex education promotes pupils' wellbeing; it develops skills and understanding within the context of respectful attitudes and values so that pupils can enjoy positive relationships based on equality. Pupils learn about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, human sexuality and sexual health. Relationships and sex education is provided in a way that is appropriate to pupils' stage of development and maturity. It is embedded within the Thrive and Floreat programmes, Cheltenham Prep and College's respective wellbeing and PSHE programmes.

This policy is based largely on the *Supplementary Advice to the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfEE (0116/2000): SRE for the 21st Century*, produced jointly by the PSHE Association, the Sex Education Forum and Brook. Cheltenham College has due regard for the Secretary of State's *Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (DfEE 2000)*, is informed by the Department for Health's *Sexual Health Improvement Framework (2013)* and the Department for Education's paper *The Importance of Teaching (2010)*, which highlights the importance of pupils receiving high quality education that helps them make informed and wise choices. Offering relationships and sex education supports Cheltenham College in maintaining its statutory obligation under the Children's Act (2004) to promote, safeguard and protect pupils' wellbeing and, under the Education Act (1996), to prepare young people for adulthood.

Providing relationships and sex education is a protective factor; evidence from the National Children's Bureau shows that providing high quality relationships and sex education delays sexual activity for young people and increases the likelihood of using contraception. Provision of this education also protects children and young people from inappropriate online content, cyberbullying and exploitation. Parents of children below the age of 16 can request that they be withdrawn from sex education lessons that form part of the Thrive and Floreat RSE lessons; pupils would continue to attend Biology lessons and the relationships element of RSE lessons (which cover topics such as family, friendship and safety, including online safety). Such requests for withdrawal from sex education would usually be granted until up to three terms before the child's 16th birthday, the legal age of consent. At this point, if the child wished to attend sex education lessons, Cheltenham College would arrange for this to happen. Before granting a request to excused from sex education, the Head would discuss the request with parent and, as appropriate, their child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Any parent of a Prep pupil wishing to request withdrawal of their child from sex education lessons that form part of Thrive should contact The Deputy Head Pastoral. Any parent of a College pupil wishing to request withdrawal of their child from sex education that forms part of Floreat should contact the Deputy Head Learning and Wellbeing. A pupil who has been excused would remain so until the request is withdrawn or to the extent or until the Head considers the pupil should not be excused.

Cheltenham College is committed to providing relationships and sex education that:

- is balanced, broadly based and reflects the values of the school
- reflects the needs of its pupils, including their maturity
- recognises the role of both school and home in providing this education
- takes into account the views of various religious and secular groups on different issues
- promotes equality and is inclusive and respectful of difference: race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, age, religion or belief or other life experience
- includes the acquisition of knowledge and the development of life skills
- has a strong emphasis on:
 - healthy relationships
 - consent
 - rights
 - responsibilities to others
 - communication skills
 - exploitation and abuse
 - pornography
 - sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (sexting)
 - sexual harassment and sexual violence
 - accessing services
- is factually correct and treats sex as a normal fact of life
- is taught by trained staff
- teaches pupils about the law

- promotes equality in relationships
- helps pupils enjoy relationships and builds confidence in accessing services
- helps pupils stay safe from harm, on and off line by addressing sexual exploitation, abuse, domestic violence and bullying

2. Principles

2.1 Relationships and sex education is integral to the school's ethos, is integrated into the curriculum and is linked to other subjects

Cheltenham College's commitment to promoting personal development and wellbeing is contained within its statement of aims and values, which underpin the ethos of the school. RSE is linked to other policies, including the ICT policy. It forms part of the wider Thrive and Floreat programmes. Many of the biological aspects of sex education are covered in the Biology curriculum. Learning the correct biological names for genitalia helps girls at risk of female genital mutilation; nationally, the most risky time for which is the summer holiday between leaving primary school (Year 6) and starting secondary school (Year 7). However, RSE is concerned with developing responsible and caring attitudes and values alongside the teaching biological facts.

2.2 Relationships and sex education must be appropriate for age and maturity

Children are naturally curious about growing up, about how their bodies work and about reproduction. Their questions need to be answered openly, using language and explanations appropriate for their age and maturity. Such age-appropriate education demystifies and provides balance to distortions sometimes presented in the media. Developing the necessary language and understanding can help pupils to recognise abusive behaviour and seek help.

2.3 It is important to teach about:

2.3.1 Healthy relationships, consent, exploitation and abuse

Teaching children and young people about consent is central to learning about healthy, safe and equal relationships. Younger pupils should learn that their body belongs to them and they can say who has access to it. This helps them understand that everyone has the right to offer or withhold consent for any activity, sexual or otherwise. Older pupils are taught about the law and sexual consent so that they recognise that the onus is on gaining rather than giving consent and also recognise non-consensual sexual situations, including rape. RSE promotes equality in relationships and mutual consent through positive and active communication (not just how to say 'no'.) Sexual harassment and peer-on-peer harm are included in College's RSE curriculum. Understanding positive and supportive behaviour in relationships helps pupils to identify controlling behaviour and stereotyped and gendered expectations.

2.3.2. Equality in relationships

RSE lays the foundation for developing empathy and introducing positive, diverse perspectives on gender roles, hopes and aspirations. It gives pupils the opportunity to challenge gender stereotypes and expectations. Respect through listening and

sharing is an essential part of RSE and pupils can learn how to challenge one another's ideas in respectful and non-confrontational ways, recognising the difference between aggressive and assertive responses. Some pupils will have witnessed domestic violence and may see it as acceptable. Although both boys and girls can be victims, evidence shows that girls are disproportionately likely to experience pressure, coercion or violence. RSE provides a clear message that violence and exploitation is always wrong and that everyone is responsible for their behaviour and for creating safe school communities.

2.3.3 Body image

Younger pupils can be made aware that advertising and the media routinely edit and photoshop images to emphasise and project only perfect bodies. RSE lessons provide opportunities to discuss body image and the pressure young people may feel as a result of the routine practice of enhancing images. For older pupils, discussions about body image may include information about nutrition, eating as a social activity, the potential influence of media on eating patterns and also include the influence of pornography in exaggerating sexual prowess and frequent depiction of oppressive behaviour towards women.

2.3.3.1 Pornography

If RSE is not provided, one of the ways in which children and young people are most likely to learn about sex is through accessing pornography. As they may not be aware that pornography does not reflect real life, they may be worried, confused or frightened by it. Some young people may also become concerned that their use of pornography is becoming addictive. Teachers and tutors can advise pupils to talk about this with a trusted non-judgemental adult. Pupils must also be aware that some pornography, child abuse images, for example, is illegal for any age.

Pornographic images are never shown in lessons.

2.3.4 Sexting

Pupils should be encouraged to think about what they would want others to know and see about them, on and offline. Safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility are core issues to teach in relation to sexting, also called 'selfies', 'nudes' or 'fanpics'. Teaching should cover communication skills, attitudes and values, the law, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and how to seek help. Pupils must be taught that it is illegal to produce, possess or distribute an indecent image of a person under the age of 18, even if it is a picture of themselves.

2.4 Relationships and sex education must be inclusive

In order to encourage all pupils to participate in discussions, lesson content and language must reflect diversity and help every child feel valued and included. The experiences of LGBT individuals should be included in case studies. Boys and girls can explore topics from a different gender's point of view. Activities should be varied and include practical tasks, discussions, group activities, quizzes and competitions.

2.5 Outside visitors

Visitors who give talks should enhance rather than replace tutor-led sessions and teachers should always be present when classes have visitors. Visitors must work within Cheltenham College's values framework; it is vital to establish that visitors' values are in line with the school's ethos. Accessible information about local support services should be made available to pupils.

2.6 Safeguarding and confidentiality

It is important to establish ground rules and a working agreement about RSE lessons. Pupils must be reminded that lessons are not a place to discuss their personal experiences and issues, instead they should be reminded of the many ways in which they can access confidential support outside of lessons, including via the Health Centre. If a pupil tells a teacher or tutor something personal on a one-to-one basis outside of a lesson that is of concern in relation to child protection or safeguarding, the member of staff must follow Cheltenham College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. They cannot promise confidentiality, but the child or young person should be told how the information they have disclosed will be treated by the school. They should be encouraged to involve their parents if appropriate.

3. Resources

3.1 Consent, abuse and accessing support:

- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk/consent
- Home Office resource *This is Abuse* <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) resources at www.ceop.police.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk For 11-13s: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_13 For 14+: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus
- Brook's Traffic Light Tool to help professionals assess whether children's sexual behaviours are healthy or unhealthy: www.brook.org.uk/traffic-lights
- Childnet guidance for schools: Online sexual harassment: <https://www.childnet.com/resources/step-up-speak-up/guidance-and-training-for-schools-and-professionals/guidance-for-schools-1>

3.2 Pornography:

- For primary schools: *Growing up Safe* from Big Talk Education <http://www.bigtalkeducation.co.uk/resources-for-primaries.html>
- For secondary schools: *Planet Porn* from BISH: <http://bishtraining.com/index.php/planet-porn/>

3.3 Sexting:

- For primary schools: Big Talk resources about explicit images: <http://www.bigtalkeducation.co.uk/resources-for-primaries.html>
- NSPCC resource to support children with getting help about sexting <http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/online-safety/pages/sexting.aspx>

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