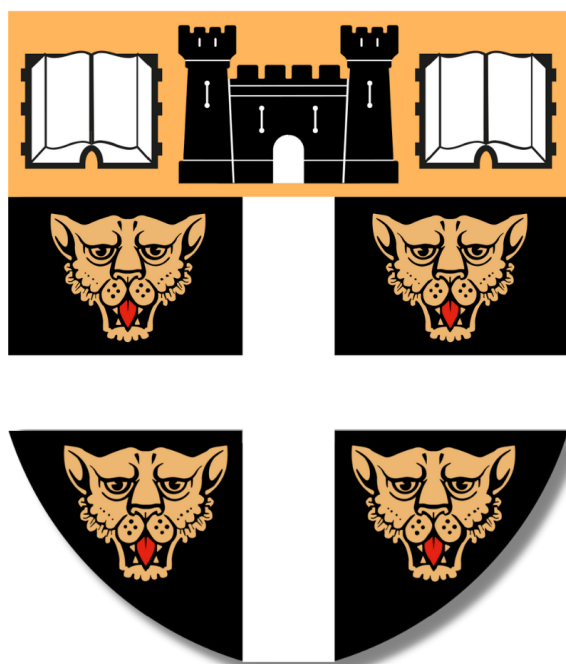


Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Dover College



Owner:	DSL	Date: June 2025
Approved By:	PT	Date: August 2025
Review Frequency	Annual	
Last reviewed on:	June 2025	
Next review due by:	June 2026	

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including boarders and those in our Prep School setting. Dover College is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy document.

Dover College seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document. This document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the PSHE Co-ordinator (greenj@dovercollege.org.uk) Senior School and (ivesk@dovercollege.org.uk) Prep School, and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

This document is reviewed annually by the PSHE Co-ordinator or as events or legislation change requires. The next scheduled date for review is June 2026.

RATIONALE AND ETHOS

High-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of Relationships, Relationships and Sex and Health Education can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, both in the real world and online. The aim of Relationships, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education is to give children and young people the skills, knowledge and understanding that they will need in order to make responsible decisions about their life, to learn to respect themselves and others, and to move with confidence from childhood into adolescence and adulthood. It is centrally concerned with supporting children and young people through their physical, emotional and moral development, helping to ensure they develop resilience, know how and when to ask for help, and know where to access support.

At Dover College, we see RSE as just one part of a lifelong process of learning about relationships, emotions, sex, sexuality and sexual health. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. Our overarching aim in RSE is to give pupils the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Our teaching of RSE should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. We aim to teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships, to help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

TEACHING, CURRICULUM AND DELIVERY

The topics covered within the RSE curriculum are wide-ranging and at times there may be understandable and legitimate areas of contention. This policy is designed to outline the purpose and content of RSE, whilst ensuring that all of the compulsory subject content is age and developmentally appropriate. We aim to teach RSE sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law and the legal implications of their actions. All topics will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for students to ask questions in a safe environment. The curriculum addresses issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on

children's physical, emotional and sexual development. This is informed by pupils' voice and in response to issues as they arise in the school and the wider community.

RSE at Dover College is underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. Through our PSHE programme we aim to foster the personal, moral, spiritual, social and cultural development of our students, as well as helping to enhance their ability to cope with life and its modern demands. We aim to encourage our students to become kinder, more confident, more thoughtful and more responsible citizens in the communities in which they live and work.

RESPONSIBILITIES

RSE will be delivered primarily by form tutors and selected staff members such as school nurses with professional experience in delivering this content. All resources are prepared by the PSHE Coordinator's and made available to the form tutors in advance. A significant amount of RSE content is taught by the Science department as part of the science curriculum and the School may also invite in appropriate experts to teach specific topics within the RSE programme. We recognise that parents and/or carers play a key role in teaching their children about relationships and sex. The school aims to work with partners and carers to support them in preparing their children for happy and fulfilled relationships in adult life.

Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for the provision of RSE and other subjects.

We will consider whether it may be appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics. We will take positive action to build a culture where sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes will not be tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled.

The School will refer to the SEND code of practice, where appropriate, and will also be aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. RSE can be particularly important for those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities, and such factors will be taken into consideration when designing and teaching the RSE curriculum.

SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

We will ensure a safe learning environment by requiring that certain 'ground rules' are established for each session and clearly understood by all those that take part. These may vary depending on the age of the students but are likely to include:

- Guidance on how potentially sensitive questions can be asked
- A general expectation of privacy and the importance of being able to talk frankly in the session without fear of discussions being repeated outside the room without due cause
- How staff will respond if anyone shares anything they consider to be concerning, particularly any issues of a safeguarding nature (they must not promise confidentiality)
- The promotion of 'distancing techniques' that encourage pupils not to personalise their questions or discussions.

Staff should bring any non-urgent issues for discussion to the pupil's Houseparent or form teacher. Any urgent and/or safeguarding issues must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

SAFEGUARDING

Effective delivery of RSE necessarily allows students an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues, which may in turn lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. All Staff are trained in child protection and, if they receive a disclosure or have any concerns about a student in their class, should follow the School's normal safeguarding procedures as set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Where visiting speakers are invited to support delivery of certain aspects of the RSE curriculum, they will be subject to the School's usual procedures for vetting visiting speakers. In addition, the School's PSHE Coordinators will brief them in advance regarding the School's safeguarding procedures and their RSE sessions will be attended by the PSHE Co-ordinator and/or relevant form tutors and/or Houseparents.

MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

Quality Assurance

The quality of RSE education at Dover College is monitored through regular pupil voice and learning walks by Julie Green (the PSHE Co-ordinator) in the Senior School and Kieron Ives (the PSHE co-ordinator) in the Prep School. Pupils and staff are involved in evaluation of the teaching programme as part of the annual review of PSHE.

Parents and Carers

This policy and the curriculum plan are made available to parents on the school website and a paper copy is available on request. Should parents or carers wish to discuss any aspect of the PSHE or RSE curriculum, they should contact the PSHE Co-ordinator for the Senior School, Julie Green (greenj@dovercollege.org.uk) or Kieron Ives (ivesk@dovercollege.org.uk) for the Prep School.

Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of the statutory RSE. Parents must state their request in writing to the Head. Parents will then be invited into School to discuss the request to ensure that their wishes are fully understood. We will clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum alongside the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on their child, e.g. the emotional and social effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing his/her peers' version of what was learned in the class rather than what was delivered by the teacher. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, School will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child.

There is no right to withdraw from relationship education.

Pupils who are withdrawn will receive purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Pupils Three terms before the student turns 16 years old, he/she is legally able to make his/her own decision as to whether he/she receives sex education. The College will make arrangements to provide the student with sex education during one of those terms and a parental request of withdrawal will not be granted.

All pupils are informed of PSHE and RSE topics in advance of the lesson and are invited to talk to their form teacher or Houseparent individually should they feel uncomfortable about being in the session itself.

STAFF

All staff have the right to additional support and guidance from the PSHE Co-ordinator. Should a staff member not feel comfortable about delivering a certain topic, they are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

RSE POLICY AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The RSE policy and curriculum has been produced in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education.

Prep School
By the end of Primary School:

Families and people who care for me	Pupils should know: • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
-------------------------------------	---

Caring Friendships	Pupils should know: • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.
--------------------	---

Respectful relationships Online relationships	Pupils should know: • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • 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 those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults. • Pupils should know: • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online
Being safe	Pupils should know: • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know

	• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.
--	---

Families Respectful relationships, including friendships	Pupils should know: ● 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 and civil partnerships are, including their legal status e.g. that marriage and civil partnerships carry 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 the raising of children. ● how to: determine whether peers, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationships is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed. Pupils should know: ● the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (both on and offline) including: trust, respect, honesty, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of 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 tolerance and respect to others and others' beliefs, including people in positions of authority. ● 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.
Online and Media Being safe	Pupils should know: • their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply online and offline. • 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 often 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 against the law. • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online. Pupils should know: • the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment and domestic abuse and how these can affect current and future relationships. • how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (on and offline).

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	Pupils should know: • 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. • that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressuring others. • that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices and options available. • the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. • 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. • how 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.
---	---