



ST. CATHERINE'S BRITISH SCHOOL

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Lower School – Relationships and Health Education Policy

Mission Statement

St. Catherine's British School endeavours to foster a love of learning through a well taught, appropriately challenging, clearly defined, broad and balanced curriculum. Our aim is to fully develop pupils' intellectual, social, physical, and creative potential, in anticipation that they will develop into sensitive, informed, decisive, and capable global citizens of the future. The wellbeing of our school community is of paramount importance, and we actively promote mental health and wellbeing for all our staff and children.

Lower School Relationships and Health Education Policy

Policy Rationale

This policy reflects the school's commitment to promoting pupils' personal development, wellbeing, and safety. Relationships and Health Education (RHE) supports pupils to develop respect for themselves and others, make informed choices, and prepare confidently for the next stage of education. Teaching is age-appropriate, inclusive, and sensitive to the cultural diversity of our international community.

This policy is informed by the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (2019, implemented from September 2020), alongside guidance from the PSHE Association, the Sex Education Forum and the Family Planning Association (FPA). For the sake of brevity, this policy will be referred to as 'RHE'.

As a British international school operating in Greece, St Catherine's delivers Relationships and Health Education in accordance with the statutory guidance for schools in England whilst ensuring compliance with applicable Greek legislation. The School recognises the cultural diversity of its community and delivers the curriculum in a manner that is respectful, inclusive and age-appropriate.

Alignment with School Values

At St Catherine's, RHE is underpinned by our core values of Care, Integrity, Dedication and Curiosity.

Care

RHE promotes care for oneself and others by developing empathy, respect and understanding of physical and emotional wellbeing.

Integrity

Pupils are encouraged to act honestly and responsibly, respecting personal boundaries and understanding the importance of mutual respect.

Dedication

The school is dedicated to delivering accurate, age-appropriate RHE and to working in partnership with parents to support pupils' development.

Curiosity

RHE recognises pupils' natural curiosity and provides safe, factual opportunities to ask questions using correct vocabulary, without exceeding curriculum limits.

Relationships and Health Education forms an important part of the School's safeguarding curriculum. Through RHE pupils learn how to recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships, understand consent in an age-appropriate way, identify trusted adults, recognise inappropriate or abusive behaviour (including online), and know how to seek help. Teaching complements the School's safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and online safety policies

What is RHE?

Science provides the factual knowledge about the body and growth, while Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) provides the social, emotional and safety context. Our Relationships and Health Education (RHE) programme combines these two elements.

RHE in primary schools should teach the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults.

Our RHE programme aims to support pupils' personal development, wellbeing and safety. It helps pupils develop healthy relationships, understand physical and emotional changes, and know how to seek help when needed. The curriculum is age appropriate, developmental, evidence informed, inclusive, medically accurate, culturally sensitive and responsive to pupils needs.

Good quality RHE is an entitlement for all children. The St Catherine's RHE provision reflects the PSHE Association Programme of Study (UK) and is taught in line with the National Curriculum for England's Science Programme of Study for Key Stage 2. Teaching does not go beyond statutory science content and is delivered in an age-appropriate and developmentally sensitive manner.

Why do we teach RHE?

We teach about RHE in the context of the school's aims and values, which underpin all our work. We teach RHE on the understanding that:

- it is fundamental to safeguarding children

- children learn how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- children recognise positive, trustworthy relationships and understand the importance of asking permission, respecting personal boundaries and recognising that they have control over their bodies
- it is taught in the context of meaningful, committed relationships and family life
- it is part of a wider process of social, personal, spiritual and moral education
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies

To ensure that our teaching of RHE is of the highest possible standard we:

- keep up to date with current resources that support us in providing the best education programme that we can devise
- consult with UK professional bodies, e.g., the PSHE Association
- listen to the views of the children in our school regarding RHE
- inform and listen to parents.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

Teaching reflects the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership where relevant. Teaching promotes respect for all people and challenges prejudice and discrimination.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in primary school Relationships and Health Education (RHE) must ensure that all lessons are safe, accessible, and reflective of every child's background.

DEI considerations for Primary RHE at St Catherine's

Family Diversity: Represent all structures including same-sex parents, single parents, foster families, adoptive families, and multigenerational households.

LGBTQ+ Inclusivity: Use gender-neutral language where appropriate and teach respect for all identities to prevent early bullying.

Cultural and Religious Sensitivity: Engage with parents when necessary to find common ground while upholding statutory inclusion requirements.

Accessible Formats (SEND/Neurodiversity): Adapt materials using visual aids, social stories, and explicit, unambiguous communication for children with special educational needs.

Anti-Racism and Cultural Representation: Feature diverse ethnicities, skin tones, and cultural naming conventions in all scenarios and illustrations.

Deconstructing Gender Stereotypes: Challenge rigid gender roles regarding toys, professions, emotions, and behaviors from the earliest stages.

Body Diversity and Positivity: Include representations of different body types, physical disabilities, and medical conditions (e.g., limb differences or visible devices)

Teaching will be differentiated where appropriate to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way.

The Role of Parents

The school understands the primary role in children's RHE lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. We have a clear, respectful mechanism for sharing the curriculum with our parents. This alleviates anxiety, counters misinformation, and builds a collaborative bridge between home and school values. We:

- offer opportunities for parents to give their opinions about our RHE curriculum in a variety of ways, e.g. through meetings and surveys
- publish our RHE policy on the school's website
- inform parents about the content of lessons and show samples of resources
- inform parents about when sensitive content about 'changing adolescent body' or birth and reproduction (science) will be taught
- answer any questions that parents may have about the RHE of their child
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for RHE in the school

Overview of Learning

The Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) elements of our RHE programme are based on the PSHE Association Programme of Study and are structured around three core themes:

- **Health and Wellbeing:** physical and mental wellbeing are both a part of daily life and are equally important. They learn age-appropriate strategies for recognising emotions, building resilience, managing change, seeking support, and maintaining positive mental health. Students also learn about growing and changing and keeping safe
- **Relationships:** families and friendships; safe relationships; respect for self and others
- **Living in the Wider World:** community, media literacy, and economic wellbeing

Statutory Relationships and Health Education is delivered across these themes. While aspects of "Living in the Wider World" are non-statutory, they are integral to pupils' personal development and understanding of modern life.

EYFS

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, RHE is embedded within Personal, Social and Emotional

Development and Understanding the World. Children begin to:

- Name basic body parts using correct vocabulary (supporting safeguarding)
- Understand personal space and body privacy
- Recognise feelings and simple safety cues (e.g. through their senses)
- Develop early understanding of relationships, differences, and inclusion

Learning is informal, play-based, and grounded in early scientific awareness of the body.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, pupils build this foundation through both Science and Relationships Education. They learn:

- The basic parts of the human body and simple life cycles (Science)
- How to form positive, respectful friendships
- That families and people are different and should be respected
- How to recognise trusted adults and seek help if they feel unsafe
- The importance of personal boundaries and appropriate contact

A strong emphasis is placed on developing the language and confidence needed for safeguarding.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, learning develops in depth and complexity. Pupils:

- Strengthen their understanding of respectful relationships, including permission-seeking, boundaries, and online safety
- Learn how to keep themselves safe, including emergency procedures and basic first aid
- Develop understanding of physical and mental health, including hygiene, diet, and active lifestyles

As part of the statutory Science curriculum, pupils learn about:

- Human life cycles
- Physical and emotional changes during puberty
- Menstruation (taught to all pupils)

This learning is delivered in an age-appropriate and factual way, within the limits of the KS2 Science Programme of Study. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and seek support as needed.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand how the human body changes as they grow, including puberty and reproduction in a scientific context, and are prepared for the transition to secondary

education.

A complete guide to the PSHE Programme of Study can be found on the PSHE Association website.
<https://pshe-association.org.uk/guidance/ks1-5/programme-of-study>

Organisation of Teaching and Learning

RHE is delivered through statutory Science and PSHE lessons. Teaching remains firmly within the limits of the KS2 Programme of Study and focuses on relationships, puberty and personal wellbeing.

Resources

For the teaching of RHE and Science elements we use the 'Growing Up with Yasmine and Tom' online resources from the FPA.

Assessment

Teachers use discussion, questioning, observation and pupil reflection to assess understanding. Assessment is formative and is used to inform future planning.

Staff training

Staff delivering RHE receive appropriate professional development and safeguarding training to ensure they teach the curriculum confidently, accurately and sensitively.

RHE/Science lesson structure

Lessons are structured in accordance with best practice allowing children time to digest information, ask questions and revisit learning. The typical learning cycle would be:

- Parents are informed before the science/RHE content is taught, so they can follow up at home, or speak to their children before the school learning takes place
- Teachers hold a meeting with parents to discuss the learning content, vocabulary, resources and activities
- The topic is taught over a series of weeks
- Clear ground rules and expectations for behaviour are created together in class
- Children are taught by known, confident, trusted adults with whom they have a positive relationship
- The first lesson introduces the topic, checks previous knowledge and asks children what they would like to know or find out about

- A vocabulary/terminology session helps remove embarrassment and create the correct language for learning
- Children are segregated by gender only when there is a clear rationale for doing so to meet the needs of the pupils, eg girls asking questions about menstruation, and only for short periods of time
- Learning is interactive and inclusive; opportunities for small group work are offered
- The emphasis is on discussion and understanding, not completing worksheets. Plentiful opportunities are given for questions, in a variety of ways
- Use of an 'Ask it basket' for anonymous questions allows teachers time to prepare their answers to potentially difficult questions

RHE/Science lesson content

St Catherine's has always interpreted 'science' in a broad sense. Our science teaching in the Lower School includes:

- Year 3, 'Pregnancy', including that male and female parts are needed to make a baby and how a baby grows in the womb
- Year 4, 'Changing Adolescent Body', general changes in puberty for both boys and girls; girl changes - periods
- Year 5, 'Changing Adolescent Body', general changes in puberty for both boys and girls; girl changes – periods; boy changes – wet dreams
- Year 6, 'Changing Adolescent Body', review
- Year 6, 'How Babies Are Made', including multiple pregnancies
- Year 6, 'How Babies Are Born'
- Year 6, pupils explore language associated with diversity, equality and inclusion, including respectful terminology and understanding protected characteristics

At the same time as the scientific elements are taught, context and depth are given by teaching the associated relationships and health aspects, for example, hygiene, choice and consent, privacy, inclusion, close loving relationships, and legal considerations.

Relationships and Health Education contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by promoting respect, responsibility, equality, kindness and an appreciation of diversity within modern society.

The right to request pupils to withdraw from learning

Relationships Education

This is statutory and must be taught by schools; parents have no 'right to request to withdraw' from this element of the PSHE curriculum.

Health Education

This is statutory and must be taught by schools; parents have no 'right to request to withdraw' from this element of the PSHE curriculum.

Science

This is statutory and must be taught by schools; parents have no 'right to request to withdraw' from science.

Sex Education

Content which goes beyond that laid down under Relationships, Health or National Curriculum science content, as interpreted by the school. For example, teaching about how to use a condom in primary school would come under sex education.

Parents still have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education (primary & secondary up to 15 years old). Pupils who are withdrawn from sex education can opt themselves in from three terms before 16th birthday.

St Catherine's does not teach beyond the statutory content as laid down in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and the Statutory Guidance 2019. Therefore, there is no right to request to withdraw from our teaching programmes.

The role of other members of the community

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children regarding health education. In particular, the school nurses and other health professionals who can give us valuable support with our RHE programme.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Teachers conduct RHE lessons in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will not try to investigate but will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) about their concerns. The DSL will then follow our child protection procedure.

Online safety is embedded throughout the curriculum. Pupils learn how to stay safe online, recognise inappropriate content or contact, protect personal information, and seek help from trusted adults where necessary.

The role of the Head of Lower School

The Head of Lower School is responsible for ensuring that the RSE policy is communicated effectively to staff and parents, implemented consistently across the school, and that staff receive appropriate training to deliver RSE with confidence and sensitivity.

Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of the programme is monitored through lesson observations, planning scrutiny, pupil voice and staff and parent consultation.

The Head of Lower School is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy and monitoring planning for Relationships and Health Education (RHE) within the Lower School. The policy is reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes.