



## **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**

### **1. I am keen to discuss aspects of RSE with my child at home. Are there any recommended resources that I could use?**

**A.** We share the DfE's view that children should receive the primary source of their RSE education in the home with a parent or carer. We would therefore encourage these discussions in the home and will be encouraging students to have these conversations with parents. There are many resources available that are aimed at parents or provide detailed and good quality information that you may wish to use. The resources listed below have been recommended for parents by a variety of trusted sources, but they are not endorsed by QMHS. We would encourage you to take a careful look at them before sharing any content with your child to check for suitability and appropriateness.

- <https://wearebetty.com/pages/parent-hub-landing-page>
- <https://www.always.co.uk/en-gb/tips-and-advice-for-women/parents-and-carers>
- <https://amaze.org/>
- <https://www.outspokeneducation.com/>
- <https://www.scarleteen.com/>
- <https://www.bishuk.com/>
- <https://www.brook.org.uk/>
- <https://www.walsallsexualhealth.co.uk/>
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/parents>
- <https://riseabove.org.uk/>
- What's Happening to Me? By Susan Meredith (Book)

### **2. Why have the Government brought in the new statutory guidance for RSE?**

**A.** It was noted that many adults did not receive much in the way of RSE lessons when they were at school. However, the world is very different today and with the use of mobile phones, the internet and the ability to share and view images being a lot more common, this comes with risk. It became clear that it is vital that we educate children to be aware of these risks and the consequences of actions so they can make informed choices. If they do not receive this information they may turn to unreliable sources of advice such as the internet. The DfE has therefore made RSE statutory and all schools must teach this content. This means students across the country will receive a consistent approach to RSE and be taught

the topics that are felt to be important for their current and future well being and safety.

### **3. What new RSE topics will now be taught that were not before?**

**A.** QMHS has always had a comprehensive Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum so there is very little content that is new. Some aspects are new and some will now be covered in more detail than they would have been previously. There are some specific terms that will now have a more formal place in the curriculum, including:

- Domestic abuse
- Rape
- Harassment
- Sexual assault
- Fertility and miscarriage
- Menopause

### **4. Why is my child learning about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) if she is not at risk of this?**

**A.** FGM now forms part of the statutory guidance and cannot be withdrawn from. Although instances of FGM are rare in the U.K. it still poses a risk to some young people. It is therefore important that all students learn that FGM is illegal and harmful and where to seek help, so we can protect all children from this dangerous procedure. Students will also have the information needed to know how to raise concerns for themselves or others to a trusted adult. This topic is therefore very important for safeguarding all students in the U.K. As FGM is most common in younger children, Year 7 pupils will receive this education to maximise the safeguarding impact. All content is age appropriate and dealt with in a sensitive manner. We have been teaching this topic successfully for many years.

### **5. How will the parents' right to withdraw change from September 2020?**

**A.** Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory and non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before your child turns 16. After this point, if your child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Queen Mary's High School is aware that there is a lot of overlap between the Relationships, Health and Sex education content. All of this content must be taught but some aspects of sole Sex Education can be withdrawn from. We have consulted with multiple professionals and agencies to define the specific Sex Education in PSHCEE as content related to:

- Resisting pressure and waiting for the right time
- Contraception
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's)

Parents are advised to consider the benefit of their child receiving this education in the classroom by a professional teacher and with objective and factual information rather than from other less reliable sources such as the internet or their peers.

#### **6. How to I request my child be withdrawn from some/all of the Sex Education lessons?**

**A.** A letter will be sent to parents in advance of any Sex Education lessons that will be taking place. This will outline what content will be taught and give a deadline for any withdrawal request.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing to the Head Teacher, stating your child's name, class and reasons for removing your child from the lessons. You may be contacted by the Head Teacher or Subject Leader to discuss these reasons before permission is granted for your child to be excused from these lessons.

#### **7. Can I withdraw my child from the Biology lessons that cover Sex Education topics?**

**A.** No. The Biology curriculum is statutory and therefore legally, your child must attend. In Biology lessons, the topics will be covered in a sensitive and factual manner. Your child will look at how contraception works on a Biological level, and how some STI's affect the body. In contrast, PSHCEE lessons on these topics will look at a range of contraception choices, how to discuss these with potential partners and where to get contraception from. In PSHCEE, students will find out about a range of STI's, how they are contracted (and how they can be protected), symptoms, treatments, long term implications as well as the importance of testing.

#### **8. Will my child be taught about LGBTQ+ relationships?**

**A:** Part of the statutory relationships component is that all students should be taught about different types of relationship and this includes different LGBTQ+ terms that relate to gender, sexuality and relationships. These lessons are designed to foster respect for others and appreciate everyone's differences. This will also help educate pupils about healthy relationships. This content will meet the needs of all pupils and will be age appropriate.

At Queen Mary's High School, we always strive to be inclusive and we teach about many aspects of people's identity in a positive way. We believe this helps all students to feel

comfortable and accepted in our school community and helps to remove stigma and reduce bullying.

**9. The RSE policy refers to the Relationships and Sex Education lessons but the statutory guidance also includes Health education. Where will this be taught?**

**A.** The statutory guidance does cover health education as well as RSE. We have not included these topics in the RSE policy as not all aspects are related to RSE. However, we will be teaching all of the health education lessons through PSHCEE and some parts will also be included in other subjects such as P.E for example.

***Last update: September 2020***