



## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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## 1 Overview

- 1.1 Tanglin Trust School is a mixed, 3-18 school. We serve the international community in Singapore, and our student body is represented by over 50 nationalities. This policy has been written with regard to the School's mission and values. In particular, regarding our core value of Respect, we aim for all members of our community to have respect for themselves and for others.
- 1.2 This policy is informed by the DfEE guidance document *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance* (ref DfEE 0116/2000) and supplementary guidance published by the PSHE Association, UK. In this document, Sex and Relationships Education (RSE) is defined as:

*“A lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health.”*

- 1.3 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is part of the Lifeskills curriculum. The overall aim of RSE is to provide students with sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding regarding sex and relationships to enable them to make sense of the changes they experience as they go through childhood, puberty and adolescence into adulthood. It should enable them to enter into successful relationships with the greatest degree of control over their sexual and reproductive health. The RSE Programme aims to equip students with the ability to make informed choices about their lives and relationships.
- 1.4 While we use RSE to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. RSE will, as far as possible, support the importance of marriage or stable relationships, for family life and bringing up children. Within this, the school will ensure there is no discrimination of children based on their different home circumstances. We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.
- 1.5 We aim to work closely with parents, carers and governors and to create an ethos that will ensure all students receive appropriate, accurate and honest answers to their questions about RSE. Our RSE programme is set within the context of Singapore law and is sensitive to the values of Singaporean society.

## 2 Guiding Principles

- 2.1 We deliver RSE within a framework that emphasises the core moral values and ethos of the School.
- 2.2 In particular, we teach sex and relationships education in the belief that students should:
- respect the rights and feelings of others
  - show tolerance and sensitivity towards people with different religious and cultural views and beliefs
  - be taught to have respect for their own bodies
  - learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity, including teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and sexual activity and the law (in Singapore and elsewhere)

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- learn the importance of building positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect

2.3 Furthermore, we believe that it is important to:

- promote self-respect and responsibility for self
- stress the paramount importance of mutual consent in sexual matters
- teach RSE within the context of committed, long-term, loving relationships and stable family life
- recognise that RSE is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process

2.4 We strive towards delivering sex education within our commitment to equal opportunities and to equal access.

### 3 Objectives of This Policy

3.1 Our RSE programme aims to offer all students a planned programme of education in order to:

- teach about human development, relationships and family life which are developmental and appropriate to the age and maturity of the student. This should provide students with the opportunity to explore the role, value and responsibilities of family life.
- prepare students for the changes they will experience during puberty and provide information about the physical, social and emotional aspects of puberty before and during its onset. This will include the provision of appropriate vocabulary for all parts of the body, emphasise the importance of personal hygiene and encourage students to respect their own body and to accept variations in growth and development.
- encourage students to develop a positive attitude towards their body and all bodily functions and help students to recognise that they have rights over their body. This will provide students with the opportunity to recognise peer social pressure and boost self-esteem.
- explain the human biology of reproduction and how a baby is born.
- explain the different forms of contraception and how to maintain sexual health for students in older years. This will include an understanding of how sexually transmitted infections are spread and how this can be prevented.
- discuss the importance of respecting their body and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship. This will also provide the opportunity to explore cultural differences in relation to RSE and examine values and attitudes relating to sexual health and activity.
- discuss the importance of consent and what this means in a practical sense.
- recognise, respect and accept the views of others and the differences between people.
- offer advice regarding sexual abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters. Sources of help for general sexual health and development will also be made available; students will be encouraged to develop the skills and confidence to use them.

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3.2 The RSE Programme will help students to:

- develop skills in personal relationships, for example communication
- develop skills in decision-making and problem-solving
- develop an awareness of the need to respect other people's lifestyles, including their sexual identity
- understand and respect the varied cultural and religious influences on individuals in society, especially when making choices about relationships
- distinguish fact from fiction when discussing sexual health topics

3.3 Our RSE Programme does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches 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 that are particularly important today because of the many different and conflicting pressures on young people.

## 4 Organisation

4.1 Our RSE curriculum is coordinated by the Heads of Lifeskills in each school, who are responsible for:

- The planning and implementation of RSE throughout each school
- Supporting class teachers in the delivery of RSE
- Managing RSE teaching resources, including purchasing and keeping up to date with new resources
- Advising the school's Leadership Teams of training and development opportunities
- Leading a partnership approach with school nurses and other outside agencies
- Monitoring and evaluating classroom practices

4.2 RSE will be taught as part of the Lifeskills curriculum and will be delivered by appropriately trained teachers, supported by the Heads of Lifeskills, the school nurses and the vertical representatives for Lifeskills in Infant and Junior School year groups.

4.3 Single gender lessons will be used when appropriate, e.g. when children have gender specific questions to answer. However, we believe that it is important that all children are aware of changes and issues surrounding all genders and, therefore, we aim to keep single-sex teaching to a minimum.

4.4 Boys and girls will find out about the changes which happen to both genders. Children will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the content and Junior School children will be encouraged to discuss the sessions at home with parents.

4.5 The delivery of this programme will be flexible and it will be delivered through:

- age appropriate videos
- games and cartoons
- discussions
- question and answer sessions
- class discussions or circle time

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- visits from the school nurse
- single or mixed gender groupings
- classroom or more informal settings may be used

4.6 All staff at the School understand that the subject of RSE can be challenging but believe our students have a right to be provided with suitable, accurate information, matched to their age, physical and emotional development.

## 5 Delivery of the RSE Programme of Study

### 5.1 Methodology and Approach – Good Practices:

Teachers are encouraged to focus on the need for students to develop skills and clarify values, as much as they ensure that the relevant content is delivered.

- 5.1.1 To this end, group work, role play, case studies, discussion and reporting back along with other forms of participatory learning are strongly encouraged. The use of videos, leaflets and demonstrations of sanitary protection and methods of contraception are essential elements of teaching RSE.
- 5.1.2 For any good RSE lesson, ground rules must be fully established, the lesson objective shared with students and for learning to be differentiated where needed.
- 5.1.3 We believe that being unambiguous and open about sex and sexual matters is necessary for effective RSE. However, teachers will ensure that appropriate language is used.

### 5.2 Training:

- 5.2.1 The School recognises that, in order to properly implement and maintain this policy, there is a requirement to ensure that key staff have the opportunity to access appropriate and relevant training and development opportunities.

### 5.3 Ground Rules:

- 5.3.1 At the start of the RSE programme, clear ground rules will be set out and then regularly reinforced. The following rules might be included following discussion with the class:
  - no personal comments about others
  - no personal questions
  - listen respectfully to what others have to say
  - no one has to say anything if they don't want to
  - treat others' questions and comments with respect
  - use appropriate language

### 5.4 Procedures for reviewing effectiveness of programme:

- 5.4.1 Evaluation of the programme will be made by assessing the attitudes of the pupils, the development of their personal skills and the knowledge and understanding they have gained. Pupil evaluation will be monitored in line with other monitoring arrangements for the PSHCE/Lifeskills programmes.

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## 6 Content Concerns, Student Disclosures and Confidentiality

### 6.1 Concerns regarding the content of the programme:

Parents and students will be informed about the start of the RSE programme of study via assemblies, communications home and the Parent Portal. Enough time will be given to allow parents to speak with the teacher in charge of the RSE programme about any concerns they may have regarding the content to be covered.

- 6.1.1 The Lifeskills curriculum, including RSE, is an essential part of our curriculum and it is expected that all students will take part.
- 6.1.2 In line with our ground rules, Senior School students will be made aware that individuals may choose to withdraw from certain activities, or whole lessons, if they find the topic triggering.

### 6.2 Personal disclosure, confidentiality and child sexual abuse procedure:

- 6.2.1 For more information regarding these specific areas, please refer to the School's [Confidentiality](#) and Safeguarding and [Child Protection Policies](#).

### 6.3 Children's questions, including RSE-related disclosure and confidentiality:

- 6.3.1 Sometimes a student will, in the classroom forum, ask an explicit question on a topic which may lead into sensitive, difficult or controversial areas. It is our policy that staff should answer every question asked by students with regard to RSE, where possible.
- 6.3.2 In order to do so, staff will be trained to answer questions in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner prior to the delivery of RSE sessions to children. The School expects the teachers to use their professional skills and discretion and always to keep in mind the age and maturity of the child as well as the aims, values and procedures set out in this policy document.
- 6.3.3 If a teacher is concerned or in doubt about a possible disclosure, they must immediately speak to the member of staff responsible for child protection, in line with the Child Protection Policy.
- 6.3.4 In some cases a question/comment may indicate the child to be at risk or in danger, in which case appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#). This also means that if the child puts a private question to a teacher or other member of staff and requests secrecy, NO promise of secrecy or confidentiality will be given, but the child will be reassured that any steps taken will always be in the child's best interest. Any child in such circumstances would be stopped from proceeding and told clearly that secrecy or confidentiality could NOT be given.

## 7 Specific Issues Statements

### 7.1 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

- 7.1.1 The School has a fundamental commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), detailed in our [DEI Policy](#).
- 7.1.2 Our commitment to anti-racism and anti-sexism is stated in the Anti-Bullying Policy. We also see our commitment to education across all the ability ranges as being central to our promotion and practise of equal opportunities. Students with special educational needs and disabilities share a right to relevant and appropriate RSE.

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- 7.1.3 The School expects that teachers will want to counteract prejudice and victimisation and will support the development of self-esteem and a sense of responsibility in every student. Whatever an individual teacher's feelings may be, the School has a general duty to ensure that every student, including those who may be or become lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ), has their emotional and pastoral needs met. Assemblies will be used to address homophobic attitudes or behaviour.

## 7.2 Contraception:

- 7.2.1 Information about methods of contraception is covered in the Senior School Lifeskills programme.
- 7.2.2 Lifeskills teachers will not offer individual advice to students and any disclosures will be treated in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy and our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as in [section 6.3](#) above.

## 7.3 Handling sensitive issues:

- 7.3.1 The School believes that teachers can do much to counteract the myths and misinformation which many young people have about HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). In teaching about STIs, we aim to ensure that all young people will know and understand the modes of transmission, basic hygiene and how to lessen the risks of transmission.
- 7.3.2 Teachers will teach about abortion/termination in the knowledge that some students and parents may be opposed to it. The legal rights of women in respect of abortion, in Singapore and other countries, will be stressed and the issue will be placed in the context of the moral and emotional dilemmas that women may experience. Teachers will emphasise that abortion is not an alternative to contraception.
- 7.3.3 As part of the teaching programme, teachers will make explicit reference to students' rights and the possibility that they may encounter people – including people in their family – who may abuse those rights. Students will be encouraged to develop an awareness of sexual abuse so that they can recognise danger signs and feel more confident in disclosing any concerns. Teachers will follow the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) in the case of any disclosure.

# 8 Working with Parents

- 8.1 The School is well aware of the primary role played by parents and carer's in children's RSE, particularly with regard to:
- Teaching their children about sex and relationships
  - Maintaining the culture and ethos of the family
  - Helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up
  - Preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings
- 8.2 We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our School through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective, we:
- answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child

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- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school
  - inform parents of the RSE programme and when it is due to be delivered to allow for support at home
- 8.3 Information to support parents of young children in talking to them about ‘the underwear rule’ and staying safe is available on the Parent Portal. In the Junior School, videos and other resources are made available to parents during an RSE parents’ information session, alongside an opportunity to discuss aspects of the programme with the Head of Lifeskills and Assistant Head of the Junior School. We welcome parental feedback after RSE lessons.
- 8.4 The school believes that it is important that parents are informed and consulted about the policy-making process. The School intends to consult parents through the regular Parent Voice meetings.
- 8.5 The RSE programme is sensitive to all religious and cultural beliefs. It recognises that not all members of a particular religious or cultural group necessarily hold the same beliefs about sex and RSE.

## 9 The Role of Other Members of the Community

- 9.1 We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education.
- 9.1.1 The School intends that visitors are used to supplement and not to replace a planned programme of RSE. All visitors will be given a copy of this policy prior to their visit and will be made aware of the ethos of the school, and the methods used to deliver the RSE programme.
- 9.1.2 In general, the School believes that it is appropriate for teachers to accompany visitors in the classroom. It is the duty of the teacher, and not the visitor, to maintain discipline in the classroom.
- 9.1.3 The School is aware that many outside agencies and resources are available to it. Health professionals, including the school nurse, are able to speak to young people in confidence.
- 9.1.4 The School recognises that students can benefit from the contribution of those who are able to describe their personal experiences, e.g. a young mother or members of the LGBTQ community.

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