

4<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

**Everyone's Invited Website and Consultation in relation to St. John's Academy Relationships and Sex Education Policy – this consultation begins on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and ends on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021**

I know that many of you will have read about the national response to the Everyone's Invited website in recent weeks. This is a website that has been set up with the purpose of changing societal attitudes by highlighting examples of sexual harassment, sexual violence, and abuse through anonymous testimonies.

It is clear that these testimonies raise a significant national and societal issue and, in that context, I wish to remind parents and students of the safeguards that we have in place to make sure that our students are not placed at risk:

- All staff have updated safeguarding training in line with the latest government guidance. Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy has guidance within it around the indicators of peer on peer abuse and harmful sexual behaviour along with our response procedures. It is available on our academy website [here](#).
- All students are taught the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum. This programme is well taught, comprehensive in nature and age appropriate. Our Draft RSE Policy is available on the academy website. Parents are now being invited to comment on this policy – please see below.
- All students benefit from working in a calm, safe school underpinned by a clear behaviour policy and subsequent expectations.
- We advocate high expectations of conduct from all members of our community including respect, honesty, kindness, tolerance, and courtesy. We communicate these values every day through high expectations of behaviour and this is further supplemented by our Wellbeing curriculum that is delivered in bespoke lessons and as part of our assembly programme.
- All students know our safeguarding team as this forms part of their induction.

As a part of your child's educational experience at St. John's Academy, we aim to promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensively taught programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education that gives children and young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive and fulfilled lives, both now and in the future.

As you may already be aware, the Department for Education has announced changes to relationships and sex education following nationwide consultation. These changes will come into effect this academic year and all schools will be required to comply with the updated requirements. The statutory guidance can be found at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

The new guidance focuses on healthy relationships and keeping children safe in the modern world. It also covers a wide range of topics relating to physical and mental health, wellbeing, safeguarding and healthy relationships.

Learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up will give children and young people the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships and help them take responsibility for their own well-being.

Consequently, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), along with Health Education, will be statutory, and form part of the National Curriculum.

This means that we have been reviewing our RSE curriculum and policy so we can be sure our RSE provision is appropriate for our pupils based on the following characteristics:

- Age
- Physical and emotional maturity
- Religious and cultural backgrounds
- Special educational needs and disabilities

We hope that consulting with you will help to inform our academies' decisions on when and how certain content is covered and enable us to reach a consensus.

Consequently, as part of our curriculum review, we would like your views on the following:

- Our draft policy for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- When and how certain content within this subject is covered

What is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the academy; however, the right to withdraw children from some lessons is explained in the FAQs which is on our website (see below).

As an academy community, we are currently in unprecedented times, this makes it difficult to launch the consultation in person. To help you understand the curriculum requirements, I have placed information on our website that I would encourage you to read. Part of this is a presentation for parents and a FAQ sheet that aims to respond to the questions that I anticipate may have been asked.

On our website, I have included:

- Our proposed [Draft Policy for PSHE \(including RSE\)](#) (ABOUT US > Academy Policies)
- An overview of the curriculum found within the policy
- A link to an [anonymous consultation questionnaire](#) (or click/ scan the QR code).



We will be starting our consultation process on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, and the consultation will close on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

Consultation Questions (on the questionnaire).

Q1: Is our RSE Policy clearly written and easy to understand – could any parts of it be made clearer?

Q2: After reading Section VII of our RSE Policy (“The Right to Withdraw”), do you understand how to submit a request to withdraw your child from the elements of sex education that are not taught as part of the compulsory national science curriculum?

Q3: After reading our RSE Policy and RSE Curriculum, how would you rate your understanding of when and how your child will be taught about the range of RSE topics required by the DfE?

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Q4: To what extent do you agree with the following statement about our RSE Policy and Curriculum: "I feel confident that my child will be taught about the range of RSE topics required by the DfE at an appropriate stage in their development, in a way that is sensitive to their cultural or religious background and in a way that respects the dignity and equality of all students".

Your views are very important to us and we will respond to you on the outcome of this process later this term. Once we have considered all the feedback, the finalised Relationships and Sex Education Policy will be uploaded to the academy's website, which will also set out the proposed curriculum.

I hope this letter and attached information goes some way to answer any questions you may have. If you have any queries or concerns regarding the consultation process, please do not hesitate to contact the academy.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. McNeill".

**Maeve McNeill**  
**Assistant Vice Principal**