

The Policy

Statutory Relationships and Health Education "The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education...

They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools." DfE Guidance p.8 "Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way." "This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England...as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools." "In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy." "These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others' wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society."

This Policy links very much alongside our PSHE Policy

What is RSE?

The term *relationships and sex education – RSE* – is used in this policy rather than *sex education*. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information and mainly focuses on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

According to the latest DfE guidance RSE is:

'Lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of 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'

DfE's 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' 2000.

The guidance suggests that RSE should have three main elements as follows:

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships.

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Acknowledging different family units e.g. single parents and extended families.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

Personal and Social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

The schools approach to RSE consists of:

The taught National Curriculum Science Programme of Study.

RSE modules within each Key Stage delivered through use of Dimensions Curriculum plans alongside additional units through GHLL and using the latest RSE guidance documents and resources.

Pastoral support for pupils who experience difficulties.

Provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books.

Why RSE?

Legal obligations

Maintained primary schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide a 'sex education' programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and this must be available to parents. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from **'sex education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science.**

The overall aims of the school and National curriculum are:

1. To provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.
2. To promote pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' (2000) recommends that 'Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives'. The school has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing RSE.

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about relationships and sex, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

'Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to enter into sexual activity. Indeed, it can help them learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying such activity'.

DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000.

National and local support and guidance for schools to develop RSE

Rates of teenage pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infection in the UK are among the highest of all European countries. The Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to change this situation and RSE for pupils in both primary and secondary schools is seen, alongside other initiatives, as a key element. Our school's approach to RSE is in line with the Government's strategy and guidance given to schools.

At a local level support and guidance for schools to develop RSE includes:

- RSE training for teachers
- Advice and support for schools from expert LA personnel.
- Support from the school nurse
- DfES/Department of health PSHE Certification for PSHE and Sex and Relationships. (Ella Curtis)

Morals and Values Framework

Our approach to RSHE will be conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships.
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views.
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships, based on mutual consent, rather than coercion.
- The right not to be abused by other people or be taken advantage of.

We also believe that pupils have an entitlement to:

- Age and circumstance appropriate RSHE.
- Access to help from trusted adults and helping services.

RSHE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The school's approach to RSHE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias.

Inclusion

'Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in sex and relationship education. Sex and relationship education should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'

DfE RSE Guidance July 2000

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all pupils should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this school's approach to RSHE will take account of:

The needs of boys as well as girls.

Girls tend to have greater access to RSHE than boys, both through the media (particularly magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

Ethnic and cultural diversity.

Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will consult pupils and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

Varying home backgrounds.

We recognise that our pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

Sexuality.

On average, about 5% of pupils will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual (GLB). Pupils may also have GLB parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our pupils will meet and work with GLB people. Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle homophobic bullying.

Special educational needs.

We shall take account of the fact that some pupils may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RSHE needs.

The teaching programme for Sex and Relationship Education.

We intend that all pupils shall experience a programme of relationships and sex education at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development.

Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

No pupil is excluded from the programme. Using appropriate methods, they will experience most of the basic content; self-awareness, gender awareness, body recognition, privacy.

Whole School Approach

A whole school approach will be adopted to RSHE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding RSHE. In particular:

The designated RSE co-ordinator (currently Sara Bennion) will maintain an overview of RSHE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, developing the provision to meet student's needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.

Teaching staff All teachers are involved in the school's RSHE provision. Some RSHE is taught through the PSHE programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to pupils. (Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding relationship or sex issues). Teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to RSHE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information,

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some RSE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with pupils. They will have access to information about the RSE programme and supported in their pastoral role.

Governors have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the RSHE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governor's meetings.

Parents/carers have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's RSHE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish. School will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. This will periodically include information/education meetings for parents/carers.

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in inputting to RSE lessons. The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to pupil needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school.

Pupils have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate RSE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their RSE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

The Taught RSE Programme

Aims of the programme

The overall aims of the RSHE programme are:

1. To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, RSE issues.
2. To dispel myths.
3. To explore a range of attitudes towards RSE issues and to help pupils to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle.
4. To develop respect and care for others.
5. To increase pupils' self-esteem.
6. To develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others.
7. To contribute to a reduction in local and national pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.

Content and learning objectives

The RSHE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature.

Relationship and sex education takes place within mixed classes or single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant. Should a teacher be absent it **would not** be undertaken by a short-term supply teacher.

Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that pupils are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to pupils.

Ground rules and distancing techniques

Teachers are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of RSE. To this end ground rules have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach.

- Pupils will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion- everyone has the right to opt out
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Questions outside the planned material will be answered factually and in an age appropriate way
- We will listen and respect each other

Things discussed within the group needs to stay within the group. (Some things that are talked about may not be age appropriate for younger children in school. Staff cannot offer complete confidentiality – they will need to tell someone else if they are worried about the safety of a child.)

Answering difficult questions

Sometimes an individual child will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered and can be addressed later. This school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in these situations and refer to the PSHE Lead.

Monitoring, evaluation and assessment

The programme is regularly evaluated by the RSHE Lead. The views of teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis. Whilst it is difficult and often inappropriate to assess attitudes and students' personal lifestyle choices, much of the RSE programme of study is capable of formal assessment, particularly the knowledgeable components.

Dealing with questions

- Teachers should establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.
- Teachers should set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way which does not encourage giggling and silliness.
- Pupils should be encouraged to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box; the teacher will have time to prepare answers to all questions before the next session, and will choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate.
- If a verbal question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupils of the ground rules.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and attend to it later on an individual basis.
- Teachers should not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child.
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse the Head teacher should be informed and the usual child protection procedures followed.

Parental concerns and withdrawal of students

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of RSHE that are taught in National Curriculum Science or where RSHE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas.

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSHE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSHE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision.

Dealing with bullying

'Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in RSE. Relationship and sex education should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'

DfE RSE Guidance July 2000

Written and prepared by: Sara Bennion

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