

# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is part of a balanced Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) programme supported by the ethos of the school. We intend this programme to complement parental responsibilities and we see it as an integral part of each individual student's emergence into adulthood.

## Development process

This policy has been written with consultation with SLT, Heads of Year, and student feedback through their PSHCE lessons, our school nurse, parents and the Governors.

## Definition of RSE

RSE is lifelong learning about sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships and sexual health. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. RSE has a key part to play in the personal, social, moral and spiritual development of young people. It begins informally in the home with parents and carers long before any formal education takes place at school. Young people's entitlement to RSE is enshrined in the terms of the Education Act (1996).

The DfES Guidance 2000 offered this definition: *"SRE is the 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. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity."*

The National Sex Education Forum highlighted that RSE also involves:

- Acquiring information
- Developing skills
- Forming positive beliefs and attitudes

## Aims and Objective

We recognise the diverse religious and social conditions to be found in a twenty first century pluralist society and believe that RSE should be set within a broader base of self-esteem and responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.

This policy is a working document which provides guidance and information on all aspects of RSE in the school for staff, parents/carers and governors.

*Our aims are:*

- to offer students information, as fully and broadly as possible,
- to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school
- to prepare students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- to allow students to grow into independence of choice and judgement,
- to enable students to understand the relationships they are forming in terms of personal growth and commitment,
- to develop a thoughtful concern for others and a sympathetic awareness of ethical choice,,

- to encourage a respect for diversity of culture and religious conviction,
- to encourage an understanding of the responsibility they have for their own actions, and
- to encourage an understanding of the responsibility for their family, friends, school and wider community.



We will promote respect for self and others, countering ignorance and prejudice and the pressures of exploitation by:

- encouraging the development of self esteem and the valuing of each other
- creating a positive and secure environment for open discussion and constructive critical thinking.
- offering opportunities to share and explore feelings, attitudes and values
- emphasising the need for students to respect themselves and one another
- discussing the need for commitment, trust and love within relationships
- exploring students' rights, duties and responsibilities
- developing and practising interpersonal skills
- Developing students; understanding of diversity regarding religion, culture and sexual orientation
- providing relevant information to enhance student' knowledge and understanding

## **Curriculum**

Our RSE programme, over Key Stages 3 and 4, will allow our students to:

- gain the confidence to talk, listen and think about feelings and relationships
- develop the ability to address concerns and correct misunderstandings so students are able to protect themselves and ask for help
- gain skills so students can make and maintain positive relationships
- develop personal responsibility for one's actions
- gain knowledge and understanding about ways to reduce the risk of STIs (including HIV) and avoid an unplanned pregnancy
  - gain knowledge about different types of relationships, including different types and in different settings
- know how to recognise and respond to risky or negative relationships including all forms of bullying, abuse (including the distinct challenges posed by online bullying) sexual or other violence and online encounters and how to ask for help
  - understand about the concept of consent in a variety of contexts (including in sexual relationships) and how to resist pressure to have sex
  - know how to respect equality and diversity in relationships
    - understand about the physical development during puberty
    - learn about human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
    - learn about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice and support services
    - identify and understand reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay
    - understand about the moral, religious and legal issues surrounding sexual activity

## **Delivery**

RSE will be delivered as part of a coherent PSHCE programme over Key Stages 3 and 4:

- The Lead Pastoral Practitioner with responsibility for PSHCE will review the policy regularly, and will oversee the RSE programme
  - Heads of Year will work with the Lead Pastoral Practitioner to develop the RSE programme for their year group
  - Form tutors will deliver RSE in PSHCE lessons, together with input from the School Nurse and other healthcare professionals as appropriate
  - Outside agencies may be invited in to school to work with the students in workshops or assemblies. All outside agencies will be vetted and will be informed of our RSE Policy.
  - Heads of Year and the Lead Pastoral Practitioner will work with other departments, such as Science and RE to ensure that students have RSE in different contexts that enable them to understand both the technicalities and the moral issues surrounding the subject
  - Letters about the content of the RSE programme will be sent to parents before any programme is started, this will allow parents the opportunity to have an understanding of what will be covered within the PSHCE lessons and to be able to discuss this at home. Parents also have the right to withdraw their daughters if they wish, however they are encouraged to have a conversation with their child's Head of Year before making this decision.
  - Teachers will set a group agreement with students to ensure that an atmosphere is created where students feel able to discuss concerns, feeling and relationships
  - It should be recognised that questions from students will be addressed and dealt with in the most appropriate manner and not disregarded. The form in which these questions are addressed may be in group activities, or on a one-to-one basis, as appropriate.
  - Resources will be assessed to ensure that they are appropriate to the age and maturity of students. They will take into account equality of opportunity through their use of language, cultural attitudes and images, avoiding stereotyping, racism and sexism.
  - In every section of the course a variety of teaching and learning styles are used including videos, information sheets, pamphlets, textbooks, visual aids and models, games, role-play, interactive CD ROMS, the Internet and visits by theatre groups.
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### **Equal Opportunities**

The school is committed to the provision of RSE to all of its students. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision is allocated for all students but there may be occasions where students with Special Educational Needs are given extra support from Learning Support staff.

### **Confidentiality**

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. However, the school will ensure that students know that teacher cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and if a member of staff believes that a child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the named Designated Safeguarding Lead who may confer with the Head Teacher before any decision is made about the next steps. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported throughout the process.

### **Monitoring**

RSE will be monitored and evaluated regularly throughout the year:

- The Lead Pastoral Practitioner responsible will evaluate the programme for each key stage with Heads of Year in the summer term
- The Lead Pastoral Practitioner and Heads of Year will support staff with the delivery of the RSE programmes.
- Students will complete feedback evaluation sheets which will feed into the review process
- Evaluation of the programme will be made by assessing, the attitudes of the students, the development of their personal skills and the knowledge and understanding they have gained. Review forms part of the content and is an ongoing process.
- The views of students, staff and parents will be sought and taken into account as the programme develops and changes.

## **Working with Parents/Carers and Child Withdrawal Procedures**

On entry to the school, parents are invited to read the RSE policy. This helps to establish consultation and a partnership with parents, which reinforces the dual responsibility for RSE learning. Parents are kept informed about the content of the programme.

Section 405 of the Education Act 1996, which consolidates previous Education Act gives parents the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of a school's programme of sex education - where it is not part of the National Curriculum.

We place the utmost importance on sharing equal and joint responsibility with parents/carers for their children's education, including sexual matters. We do our best to find out from them any religious or cultural views they may have which may affect the PSHCE they wish to be given to their children, although we would consider carefully any request that compromised our equal opportunities policy.

Amendment NC15 introduces statutory 'relationships and sex education' across all secondary schools, including academies and independent schools. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from RSE lessons, although not those elements included in the National Curriculum Orders for Science, or any other part of the National Curriculum. If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from RSE lessons, we ask that they discuss it with the Lead Pastoral Practitioner, Head of Year or Head Teacher, to be clear about what their child will do when they are withdrawn from the lessons.

We should like to make clear that even when a pupil has been withdrawn from RSE lessons, if the pupil should ask questions at other times, these questions would be answered honestly by staff.