

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (May 2019)

What is Relationship and Sex and Education (RSE)?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

At Rigby Hall School, RSE is taught as part of the Personal Social & Health Education (PSHE) and Science curriculums. Our approach to RSE goes beyond the provision of biological information; it focuses on attitudes and values, developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships. It promotes all aspects of developing positive mental health and wellbeing as outlined under the Children Act (2004).

As Rigby Hall is a special school, it recognises that it has a sensitive role to play with regards to Sex and Relationship Education. Pupils with learning difficulties generally need more help in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up, they may need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable and they may need to be warned and prepared against unacceptable behaviour by adults.

What are our statutory requirements?

All schools in England should have an up to date relationships and sex education (RSE) policy and this is a statutory obligation for all maintained schools.

In February 2019 the secretary of state issued draft guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. This guidance states,

“... we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools.”

This will be effective from September 2020 to give schools adequate time to adjust their curriculum.

In addition to this the Children and Social Work Bill requires PSHE to be taught in all schools in England and all aspects of the act to be implemented from September 2019.

Aims

The aims of RSE are to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and other relationships
- understand their sexual feelings and behaviour so that they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives

- develop skills in language, decision-making and assertiveness
- develop skills to reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse
- can gain access to information and services

Principles and Values

As children grow up it is important that they have an understanding of their own bodies, instincts and feelings. We wish to promote understanding of diversity regarding race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability and economic circumstances. At Rigby Hall School, our planned programme of RSE will include:

- Sex education being appropriately delivered for the age and maturity of the pupils
- A whole school approach that involves parents, carers, governors, health and school staff
- Relevant training and support for staff who deliver RSE
- Children's questions and views being listened to in an atmosphere of trust and respect
- Adherence to the school's policy for confidentiality.

The teaching and learning of RSE will have three main elements:

1. Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships and marriage
- learning the value of respect, love and care
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making
- challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.

2. Personal and Social Skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- developing self-respect and empathy for others
- learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- managing conflict
- empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

3. Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay

- the avoidance of unwanted pregnancy.

RSE will support the importance of strong and stable relationships, including marriage, for family life and bringing up children. Care is taken to ensure there is no stigmatisation of children based on their different home circumstances.

Equal opportunities

All pupils are entitled to receive RSE and are given the opportunity to take part in the RSE programme regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religious belief or ability. Every effort is made to ensure that self-esteem and respect are fostered in staff, pupils and their families.

Organisation of Sex and Relationship Education

RSE is an important aspect of the overall curriculum. Teaching is provided with sensitivity to the age and maturity of the pupils. Pupils can be withdrawn by their parents from those parts of the sex education programme which do not form part of the National Curriculum. These include HIV, Aids, sexually transmitted diseases and non-biological aspects of sex education.

RSE will be co-ordinated in Rigby Hall School by the PSHE co-ordinator and taught by all teachers as appropriate to the PSHE curriculum and accredited work in Key Stage 4 and 5. RSE is set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and focuses more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included. RSE will be covered under the topics of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the wider world.

Currently students are taught about the risks of the internet and Child Sexual Exploitation, in order for them to keep themselves safe. They are also taught about Sexting and Female Genital Mutilation.

Additional RSE content explicitly includes developing mental health and wellbeing to promote resilience and character in students, to ensure students are prepared for the world they live in today.

The Science curriculum complements the RSE programme when the children are required to name body parts, and know about life processes, human reproduction and human life cycles. The Science Curriculum is delivered by a Science teacher and by class teachers under the guidance of the Science Subject Leader.

Lessons may be delivered in mixed or single sex groups appropriate to the subject and pupils. We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to and respect parental requests and concerns.

Teaching and Learning

At Rigby Hall School we use a range of teaching and learning styles with an emphasis on active learning by including the children in discussion, investigations and problem-solving activities. We offer children the opportunity to take part in whole class and group activities, circle time, role-play, homework, individual and group research and time for reflection and question. Sources of information include books, posters, videos/DVDs, computer software, artefacts, visiting speakers from outside agencies, theatre groups and visits out of school.

Resources used for RSE will be kept in an identified resource area and will be up to date and suitable for planned activities.

Parental/Carer Liaison

The school includes information on RSE on the school website by publishing this policy and further details are available on request.

Parents will be informed of lessons covering sensitive areas such as, contraception or sexually transmitted diseases. Permission for participation will be assumed unless an objection is received. Pupils cannot be withdrawn from any part of the RSE which falls within the statutory National Curriculum Science framework.

Parents are always welcome to discuss and work with staff about any aspects that are related to RSE that concerns them. The school nurse can also offer further support.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

While respect for the individual and attention to the needs and wishes of each student are very important to the school, these have to be balanced with professional judgement and legal considerations. At Rigby Hall School the normal procedure to be followed is:

- Staff cannot and should not promise absolute confidentiality.
- Staff who receive any such information, which relates to child protection, will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead, in co-operation with the Headteacher if they are not one of the same, should address any child protection concerns and refer on to the appropriate agency and/or health professional as necessary.
- The staff member will be informed of subsequent action and involved as appropriate.

The exercise of professional judgement by staff in relation to informing parents/carers of any confidential disclosure should be carefully considered and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher as appropriate.

Student Withdrawal Procedures

Some parents prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of RSE. Section 241 of the Education Act 1993 gives parents the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RSE programme, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons).

However, it is hoped that parents will see the value and importance of this programme in supporting their role in preparing their children for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings.

Any parent/carer wishing to withdraw their child from RSE should be encouraged to discuss the matter with the Headteacher; however the right of withdrawal does not include students over compulsory school age, which in the case of Rigby Hall School will be students in Post 16.

The right of withdrawal does not affect any spontaneous discussion that arises in other curriculum areas. Inevitably there will be occasions when the teaching of apparently unrelated topics will lead to a discussion of aspects of sexual behaviour. These should be handled with discretion and kept within the context of the subject being taught.

Procedures for the involvement of Health Professionals and other relevant visitors

The contribution of visiting speakers is complementary to the teacher's; however the following procedures must be followed:

- Visiting speakers will be provided with a copy of this policy document and must comply with its contents as a 'temporary' member of the school staff.

- The host member of staff will identify to the visiting speaker the age and ability of the group, content of the session and how it is to be addressed.
- The host member of staff will be present throughout the lesson unless agreed in advance with the Headteacher.

The selection of visiting speakers is important and care should be taken that they are appropriate for the task.

The school nurse as health advisor/support for students

School nurses are/can be trained in all aspects of RSE and therefore can support classroom delivery of the programme. They can offer completely confidential advice to individuals and parents when necessary.

School staff should not expect to be informed of a pupil's or a colleague's HIV or Hepatitis status. A member of staff, who is told of a pupil's blood borne viral status, should inform the Headteacher and no one else. She/he will tell the pupil this is what they are doing. No student or member of staff will be discriminated against as a result of such a disclosure.

First aid and control of infection practice should always follow current guidelines, and assume that blood spills can be infectious in some circumstances.

Pregnancy and Parenting

Any student who is continuing with a pregnancy will be given time with a senior member of staff to ensure she knows how she may continue her schooling or Further Education and what benefits, child care etc. are available. Options would include support from the Local Authority services to continue studies outside of school setting. The school nurse will help her to access ante and postnatal care. We will also be sensitive to the needs of young fathers (to be) ensuring support around behaviour of peers, and a pointer to sources of advice on legal and other issues e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Relationship and Sex Education

It is the responsibility of the PSHE Co-ordinator to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHE including RSE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence for the monitoring and evaluation of the RSE programme is by means of lesson observations, monitoring lesson plans and gathering feedback from teachers and pupils.

Role of the Co-Ordinator

The PSHE & Citizenship co-ordinator is responsible for the organisation of the RSE programme. Their duties include:

- To devise and maintain a whole school RSE programme
- To monitor/evaluate the effectiveness of the programme, in accordance with the school monitoring programme
- To develop and maintain a resource base
- To receive, disseminate and update information
- To support liaison with outside agencies
- To produce and maintain an action plan
- To involve parents and the wider community
- To attend relevant LA courses and network meetings
- To provide appropriate support and training for staff

Links with Other Policies / Documents

This policy links particularly to the following policies: Safeguarding Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Child Sexual Exploitation, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Assessment Recording and Reporting, Anti-Bullying and Transgender. Additionally the PSHE curriculum statement that is available on the school's website.