



Relationship and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

Date adopted : October 2019

Date to be reviewed : Annually

Introduction

It is a legal requirement for Governors to publish a policy on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and for that Policy to be reviewed regularly. This policy is written in accordance with the updated DFE Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance that becomes mandatory in September 2020. It complies with the previous DFE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance that was issued in July 2000 and the Education Acts of 1996 and 2002.

What is sex and relationship education?

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable young people to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, colleague, a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time. (DFE, June 2019)

Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It should not be delivered in isolation. The objective of sex and relationship education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.

Aims

- To provide an effective RSE programme which meets the needs of all our students.
- To provide opportunities for all children to understand themselves within the wider context of physical and emotional changes and to equip them with the skills and understandings to be confident with their own sexuality.

Working with parents

Most of a student's informal sex and relationships education takes place within the family and the school's programme will complement and support the role of parents. Parents, carers and those with parental responsibility have the right, if they wish, to excuse their child from some or all of sex

education delivered as part of statutory RSE, up until three terms before the child turns 16; at this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school must make provision. There is no right to withdraw from relationships or health education. (DFE, June 2019)

We encourage all parents who have concerns to discuss these with the Deputy Headteacher responsible for the curriculum.

Inclusion

In our school we have a commitment to ensure that our RSE programme is relevant to all pupils regardless of sexuality, ability, gender, culture and religion. It is delivered in a manner that is age and stage appropriate for each pupil, and where necessary, differentiated resources and various learning styles will be used.

Confidentiality

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. We believe our students need to be aware of this and understand the issues involved. It is our aim to support all our students through effective procedures.

The staff are aware that students sometimes share information of a confidential nature and understand and value the importance of their role. Staff will treat every confidence in a sensitive way so that the student feels supported. However, both students and staff understand that there are some instances where confidences will have to be shared with others in order to protect and support the student.

For example, if a child makes reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, this will be dealt with through the school's Child Protection procedures, which are in line with Leeds Children's Services' procedures.

How teachers will answer some specific questions

It is our aim that students feel confident and comfortable when asking questions both in class and around school. In most cases, children's questions will be answered openly and honestly. However, on occasion, students may ask questions that are not appropriate e.g. questions about a teacher's personal life or of a sensitive nature.

Teachers will develop a supportive climate in their classroom, with clearly defined ways of working and the appropriate language to use. Some questions may need to be answered on an individual basis and some may require a measured response appropriate to the maturity and level of understanding of the child. In some instances certain questions will require parental involvement.

Disclosures

If a member of staff learns that a student under 16 years old is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity, the school will ensure that Child Protection policy and protocols are observed.

The curriculum - the statutory RSE curriculum as defined by DFE, June 2019 (for adoption by September 2020):

By the end of secondary school:

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary.

Families

Pupils should know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.

- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status – for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

Respectful relationships, including friendships

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as:
 - trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict
 - reconciliation and ending relationships, this includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

Online and media

Pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- the impact of viewing harmful content

- that specifically sexually explicit material, for example pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Pupils should know:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)