

Northolt High School



# **Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

## **2020**

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## **1. Rationale**

### **1.1 Definition**

The following policy outlines Northolt High School's approach to Relationships and Sex Education.

We define Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as learning about families, respectful relationships, including friendships, safe practices online, being safe and intimate and sexual relationships.

Relationships and Sex education is taught as part of PSHE lessons and the assembly program to students in all year groups. Aspects of sex education may also be covered within the national science curriculum.

RSE contributes to the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. Lessons involve a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity but rather aims to help students understand the world in which they are growing up so that they can make safe and healthy decisions for themselves as they get older. The curriculum aims to foster self-worth whilst recognising, accepting and respecting differences. Relationships and Sex Education also provides an excellent forum to provide pupils with life-skills that will enable them to make informed decisions and protect themselves against harmful and exploitative situations. RSE is therefore an important tool to safeguard children.

The Science curriculum includes the following learning:

Year 7: Reproduction of animals and plants. This includes the physicality of reproduction as well as changes during adolescence.

Year 9: The ethical implications of using foetal stem cells. Communicable diseases and how to prevent them, including sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Year 10 & 11: Meiosis in the forming of sex cells compared to normal cells as well as comparing sexual and asexual reproduction and genetic engineering.

### **1.2 RSE and Ofsted**

The 2019 Ofsted framework states that pupils should be able to recognise online and offline risks to their well-being – for example, risks from criminal and sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism – and they should be made aware of the support available to them. It also states that schools should ensure they are developing pupils' age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships through appropriate relationship and sex education.

The 2019 Ofsted framework also states:

'From September 2019, schools are able to follow a new relationships and sex education and health education curriculum. From September 2020, they will be required by law to follow it. Primary-age children must be taught about positive relationships and respect

for others, and how these are linked to promoting good mental health and well-being. In addition, sex education will become mandatory at secondary level.'

### **1.3 Moral and Values Framework:**

Our RSE Policy aims to be sensitive towards the established morals and values framework of all the major world religions and philosophies. In its implementation, it will draw from the knowledge and experiences of those who represent the various religious and philosophical groups within the local community.

## **2. Statutory requirements**

Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Further guidance is available for schools in The Equality Act 2010 and school's advice. The DfE guidance states that schools should pay particular attention to the Public sector equality duty (PSED)

Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSE to all pupils as per the Children and Social work act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At Northolt High School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

## **3. Policy development**

This policy has been developed in partnership with our school community through a consultation process. We are very grateful to the parents and governors who gave up their time to take part in working parties discussing the new curriculum. Parents were supportive of the new curriculum and felt that the more challenging content matter was important for their children's development. Their main concern was that this content matter be taught in an age-appropriate way and that, whilst accepting that children of the same chronological age may be at different stages of their development, potential more difficult subject matter should be aimed at older year groups. They also felt strongly that they would like to know which areas of the curriculum were being taught to which year groups and they were keen for the school to develop a page of the website which would point parents in the direction of trusted advice so that they might upskill themselves and support their children's learning at home. Our student council was also asked for their views on the relative importance of different areas of the content and on their preferred teaching style. They too were supportive of the main areas of the new curriculum and felt that issues like families and friendships should be taught to younger year groups. They said that they liked a variety of teaching methods and valued input from visiting speakers. They were overwhelming positive about having the chance to have class discussions and ask questions during PSHCE lessons. Our new policy is both compliant with the statutory regulations and reflective of the needs and views of our school community.

#### **4. Aim and objectives**

The aim of this policy is to enable the effective planning, delivery and assessment of Relationships and Sex Education.

Our school values are Pride, Courage and Respect. These are evident in all that we do and are especially relevant in the teaching of RSE, where we aim to support students to be proud of themselves, have the courage to do what is best for them and their wellbeing and be respectful of themselves and others.

The aims of RSE at our school are to:

- o Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide students' judgements, decisions and behaviour.
- o Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and to take appropriate action to keep themselves safe.
- o Communicate effectively.
- o Understand the consequences of their actions for themselves and others and behave responsibly within personal and intimate relationships.
- o Be aware of their emerging sexuality and understand differences in human sexuality (e.g. heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and trans-gender).
- o Be aware of different types of families and how the law applies to them.
- o Understand what consent means and factors that influence one's ability to consent
- o Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and the reasons for having protected sex.
- o Be aware of the implications for themselves and others of sexting, pornography and online grooming
- o Know how the law applies to sexual relationships.
- o Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves offline and online.

#### **5. Equal Opportunities**

Northolt High School believes that RSE should meet the needs of all students. All staff are expected to give every student the opportunity successfully participate in Relationships and Sex Education. Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where children with special educational needs (SEN) are given extra support. This may include working with families to support the specific learning needs of their child or with outside agencies offering specialist support.

We believe that RSE should meet the needs of all students and should provide the opportunity to deal honestly and sensitively with questions about relationships, sexual activity, sexual orientation and other issues related to the curriculum. The presentation of challenging topics will be planned to include sensitivity towards religious and cultural practices in our community.

The planning and organising of teaching strategies will be reviewed through the monitoring of learning and teaching to ensure that no student is disadvantaged.

## **6. Delivery of RSE**

### **6.1 Content**

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum and is include in the assembly program. RSE focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- o Families
- o Respectful relationships including friendships
- o Online and media
- o Being safe
- o Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

The above points are covered in an age appropriate way from Year 7 to Year 11. These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Sex education is covered in RSE lessons, PSHE lessons and within the National Science curriculum. For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

### **6.2 Delivery**

RSE is not delivered in isolation but firmly embedded in all curriculum areas (e.g. ICT, RE and Science), including Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship. This includes lessons on how students can keep themselves and their bodies' safe and what to do if they are worried about any changes to their body.

RSE will usually be delivered by a member of school staff but may be delivered by an external visitor with specialist expertise.

RSE is usually delivered in mixed gender groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups.

RSE will be assessed as part of the wider PSHE curriculum.

Staff are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that students are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.

Both formal and informal questions from students are answered according to the age and maturity of the student(s) concerned. Questions may sometimes not be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned about the student's safety or wellbeing.

The following are the basis of protocols teachers follow in leading RSE lessons.

- o No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- o Neither students or teachers should be asked inappropriate personal questions and teachers will manage the learning environment to ensure that no-one has to answer a personal question.
- o Only correct/agreed names for body parts will be used

- o Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
- o The use of a question box may help to lessen embarrassment of asking questions
- o Teachers may use their discretion in responding to questions and may say (for example):
  - The appropriate person to answer that question is your parent
  - The question can be discussed one to one after class
  - The topic will be covered at a later stage in their Relationships Education

The implementation of Relationships Education is monitored through book scrutiny, lesson observations, student and staff feedback.

### **6.3 Training**

Staff are training on the delivery of RSE is included in our continuing professional development provision. The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or the health improvement team, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

## **7. Child protection**

Although the legal age of consent is 16 years old, there are young people who are sexually active under the age of 16.

If a member of staff becomes aware that a student under the age of 16 is or may be sexually active or they have other concerns about a student's safety and welfare, they will report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) using the usual safeguarding procedures. Action will then be taken in line with the school's published safeguarding policy, which is available on the school website.

Students and families may be referred to outside agencies or organisations for support.

The school will always seek to include families in any specific support regarding contraception and sexual health offered to a student under the age of 16. However, occasionally it is in the best interests of the student to offer support without involving the family. In cases such as these, the school response will be led by the DSL and will adhere to the Fraser guidelines (App. 3)

Northolt High School will ensure that the confidentiality of students and their families is respected when working with external professionals such as the school nurse.

## **8. Partnership with families**

Northolt High School views students' families as partners in the delivery of Relationships Education. Families will be informed about the RSE programme via the school's website as part of information provided on what their children will be learning. We encourage families to discuss RSE with us. This policy will be available on the school website.

### **8.1 Right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher.

If you withdraw your child from sex education lessons, the school cannot guarantee that your child will not hear about the content of lessons from other pupils for example in the playground or walking home from school. By withdrawing children from sex education lessons, they may seek the information from elsewhere for example from friends, siblings or the internet. These sources of information can be misinformed or unreliable and can expose children to information which is not appropriate for their age.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. Once a request is received we will seek to discuss this with you to agree arrangements.

In the event of a student being withdrawn from a lesson, that student must stay in school and will be supported to continue their learning somewhere other than the class.

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

### **9.1 The governing body**

The governing body will review and approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

### **9.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE.

### **9.3 Teaching staff**

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- o Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- o Modelling positive attitudes to Relationships Education
- o Monitoring progress
- o Responding to the needs of individual pupils

All teaching staff, including cover teachers, will deliver RSE lessons. An appointed middle leader is responsible for leading PSHE and RSE in this school. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching Relationships Education although they will be supported to do so. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

### **9.4 Students**

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to Relationships Education, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

## APPENDIX 1: RSE curriculum

The following gives an outline of themse to be covered in PSHCE lessons for each year group. This will also be supplemented by assemblies and, at times, visiting professionals from other agencies.

<b>Year 7</b>	
<b>Online and media</b>	Social Networks and online safety
<b>Respectful relationships, including friendships</b>	Different types of relationships Positive and healthy friendships What to do if relationships go wrong Difference and diversity Managing conflict
<b>Being safe</b>	Drugs and Alcohol
<b>Year 8</b>	
<b>Families</b>	Different types of relationships Marriage
<b>Respectful relationships, including friendships</b>	Recognising unsafe relationships Tackling stereotypes
<b>Year 9</b>	
<b>Relationships and Sex education</b>	
<b>Families</b>	Different types of relationships Roles and responsibilities of our parents Marriage and Divorce
<b>Being safe</b>	Sexual harassment and sexual violence Sex and the Law
<b>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</b>	Healthy and unhealthy relationships How to recognise a healthy intimate relationship Self esteem and relationships STIs Contraception
<b>Online &amp; media</b>	Understanding and tackling extremism
<b>Year 10</b>	
<b>Relationships and Sex education</b>	
<b>Being safe</b>	Peer pressure Alcohol misuse Drugs misuse

<b>Online and media</b>	Sex and the internet Pornography and the law
<b>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</b>	How can sex and relationships affect all aspects of our health? Sexual pressure Facts about Contraception and pregnancy
<b>Year 11</b>	
<b>Relationships and Sex education</b>	
<b>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</b>	Choices in relation to pregnancy STIs Risks associated with sex and alcohol / drugs
<b>Respectful relationships, including friendships</b>	Self esteem and relationships Bullying
<b>Online and media</b>	Body image and the media

## **APPENDIX 2: Sample letters for families, which may be altered to suit particular circumstances.**

Dear Parent/Carer

In today's world there is a vast amount of, sometimes confusing, information about relationships and sex on the internet, on TV, in magazines, etc which young people may have access to, and this can sometimes make an already confusing time seem even more complicated! Therefore, as part of the school's Personal, Social and Health Education programme your child will soon receive lessons on relationships, sexual health and puberty.

The purpose of Relationships and Education (RSE) is to provide knowledge and understanding of how the human body changes during puberty and the processes of human reproduction, within the context of relationships based on love and respect. It should develop understanding and attitudes which will help pupils to form relationships in a responsible and healthy manner and to appreciate the value of stable family life, including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage.

If young people can start their transition into adulthood with good information and the confidence and knowledge to understand what is happening to them, they will hopefully grow into confident and healthy adults able to make positive choices. This can start with learning the basics about growing up and the sessions in school may reinforce what you are already doing at home.

The key aims of RSE are to:

- Provide accurate and relevant information about the physical and emotional changes that children and young people will experience through their formative years and into adulthood.
- Establish an awareness of the importance of stable family life and different types of relationships, including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage.
- Foster self-awareness and self-esteem..
- Develop a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves and others.
- Know the law in relation to sex and intimate relationships

The programme will cover:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

More details are available in our RSE policy which can be found on the school website.

You are welcome to contact us to discuss the programme or the teaching materials used.

## **Appendix 3: Fraser guidelines - explanatory note from the NSPCC**

### **Fraser guidelines**

The Fraser guidelines apply specifically to advice and treatment about contraception and sexual health. They may be used by a range of healthcare professionals working with under 16-year-olds, including doctors and nurse practitioners.

Following a legal ruling in 2006, Fraser guidelines can also be applied to advice and treatment for sexually transmitted infections and the termination of pregnancy (Axton v The Secretary of State for Health, 2006).

### **Using the Fraser guidelines**

Practitioners using the Fraser guidelines should be satisfied of the following:

- the young person cannot be persuaded to inform their parents or carers that they are seeking this advice or treatment (or to allow the practitioner to inform their parents or carers).
- the young person understands the advice being given.
- the young person's physical or mental health or both are likely to suffer unless they receive the advice or treatment.
- it is in the young person's best interests to receive the advice, treatment or both without their parents' or carers' consent.
- the young person is very likely to continue having sex with or without contraceptive treatment.  
(Gillick v West Norfolk, 1985)

### **Child protection concerns**

When using Fraser guidelines for issues relating to sexual health, you should always consider any potential child protection concerns:

- Underage sexual activity is a possible indicator of child sexual exploitation and children who have been groomed may not realise they are being abused.
- Sexual activity with a child under 13 should always result in a child protection referral.
- If a young person presents repeatedly about sexually transmitted infections or the termination of pregnancy this may be an indicator of child sexual abuse or exploitation.
- You should always consider any previous concerns that may have been raised about the young person and explore whether there are any factors that may present a risk to their safety and wellbeing.

You must always share child protection concerns with the relevant agencies, even if a child or young person asks you not to.