



Dorset Education Partnership

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Policy first adopted November 2004.....
To be reviewed 3-yearly
ReviewedMarch 2006.....
ReviewedJanuary 2008.....
ReviewedMarch 2012.....
ReviewedDecember 2014.....
ReviewedNovember 2017.....
ReviewedMay 2021.....
ReviewedApril 2024.....

Rationale

From September 2020, all schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). This policy sets out the framework for Relationships and Sex Education at Ferndown Upper School, providing clarity on how our RSE curriculum is informed, organised and delivered.

This policy was reviewed and developed in response to the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- Relationships Education, Sex and Relationships Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019)
- 16-19 Study Programmes Guidance (DfE/ESFA, 2019)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2018)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, 2017)
- Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, 2016)
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, 2014)
- National Curriculum in England – Key Stages 1-4 (DfE, 2014)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Online & Digital Technology Policy

Aims and Intent

Aims

The DfE suggests that Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is provided in a way that encourages pupils to consider: personal relationships in the widest sense, morals, the importance of marriage and family life. Ferndown Upper School wholeheartedly support this philosophy and believe it is best taught as part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship programme delivered throughout the school as once a fortnight lessons for Year 9 and drop down days for other year groups. The PSHE programme goes beyond National Curriculum science and seeks to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, as well as preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We believe in a whole school approach, that contributions can be made by different curricular areas, and that teaching can be reinforced by the general ethos of the school in creating a supportive environment for all students.

At Ferndown Upper School, our over-arching aims for RSE are as follows:

- To deliver high-quality, age-appropriate and ability-appropriate RSE lessons as part of our overall planned school curriculum and ethos
- To fulfil our legal obligations related to RSE, whilst taking account of parental views
- To ensure pupils are provided with accurate information from reliable sources
- To use a range of appropriate resources matched to the strengths and needs of individual pupils
- To provide pupils with opportunities to engage positively in sensitive discussions and enable them to have the confidence to ask questions to help address any misconceptions
- To encourage pupils to remember what they learn to support their ongoing preparation for the future

Legal Obligations

The Relationships, Sex and Health Education Regulations (2019) made under the Children and Social Work Act (2017) brought some compulsory changes into effect in all schools from September 2020.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is now compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. The regulations also make Health Education compulsory in all schools.

The aim of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.

For further clarity, please see *Appendix 1* of this policy for an overview of the compulsory aspects of RSE.

Parent and Carer Engagement

From September 2020, the law requires schools to consult with parents and carers on their RSE policy. Consultation must be carried out when the policy is formed and subsequently whenever it is updated.

At Ferndown Upper School, we will notify parents/carers when the policy has been reviewed, updated and uploaded to the school website and we will provide a window of opportunity for all parents and carers to respond with their views. The final version of the policy will then be available on the school website for reference.

We will provide additional opportunities for parents/carers to be informed and ask questions about the delivery and content of the RSE curriculum by providing:

- Notification of when RSE topics are to be taught and a summary of the content to be covered
- Opportunities to view and discuss examples of RSE teaching and learning resources
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE

Parents/carers of new pupils will be provided with all of the above information at the point of admission, regardless of the time of year they join the school.

Right to Withdraw

RSE is an important part of our curriculum and it is hoped that all pupils will participate in all aspects of these lessons. However, the school acknowledges the legal rights of parents/carers as described below:

From September 2020, parents *will not* be able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education (which includes learning about the changing adolescent body and puberty).

Parents *will* be able to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school and providing notification to the Headteacher in writing) from any or all aspects of Sex Education (other than those as listed above) up to and until three terms before the age of 16.

In line with the statutory guidance, where pupils are withdrawn from Sex Education, we will keep a record of this (including discussions/requests from parents/carers) and we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

As the PSHE courses emphasise aspects of sex education within a framework of personal development, we hope that parents will recognise the benefits to students from this course and will not request withdrawal without discussing it with the school.

In line with the statutory guidance, if any secondary-aged pupil wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the pupil with Sex Education during one of the three terms before the age of 16.

Relationships and Sex Education Framework

Relationships and Sex Education covers more than biological facts and information and tries to help young people develop self-esteem and self-responsibility as well as the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare students to develop caring stable relationships. Appreciation of the value of self-respect, dignity, and parental duty should be encouraged in all students, together with sensitivity to the needs of others, loyalty and acceptance of responsibility.

How RSE is Provided and by Whom

The topics in the framework are developed gradually through PSHE lessons for Year 9 and a timetabled PSHE drop down day programme for Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 and via input from accredited outside experts, delivering input to the entire year group. This is enhanced by appropriate subject teaching and the school's pastoral system.

Roles and Responsibilities

Kate Hosey is presently the staff member who has the designated co-ordinator role for RSE. We have a dedicated team who deliver lessons in RSE, including provision from outside agencies, with aspects also delivered in science and religious education, promoting a whole school approach to emotional and social development. Science staff, following National Curriculum guidelines, will provide statutory requirements. Aspects including work about human sexual behaviour, relationships, HIV/AIDS and self-esteem will be delivered age appropriately, within the PSHE framework. We have achieved targets set by the Healthy Schools Scheme. We work

closely with specialist outside agencies to provide an up-to-date appropriate programme.

Teachers who are given responsibility for delivering RSE lessons must recognise the importance of RSE. They must seek support and advice wherever necessary to ensure that teaching continues to be well- prepared and of a high standard at all times.

Delivery of RSE within PSHE drop down days and within workshops delivered by external experts will be monitored during the year in the same way as all other curricular subjects. It will be done by one or more of the following – Line Managers, Subject Advisers and Inspectors, Governing Body, Ofsted Inspectors.

At Ferndown Upper School, the Headteacher, assumes overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation and delivery of RSE lessons are carried out by staff who have an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge and that all pupils make progress in achieving the expected outcomes. The Headteacher is also responsible for managing any requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education lessons and organising alternative appropriate education.

Implementation (Organisation and Delivery)

Effective RSE does not encourage or promote sexual experimentation. At Ferndown Upper School, RSE is carefully planned and delivered primarily through our PSHE curriculum. Some aspects of RSE feature across several topics, yet discrete RSE topics are also planned and delivered, giving full consideration to the timing of this as related to the age and emotional maturity of our pupils. Additional teaching may also take place within assemblies, Science lessons, RE lessons and other areas of the curriculum, but these will be part of our carefully planned approach to RSE and not simply an 'add-on'.

Through effective organisation and delivery of RSE, we ensure that:

- RSE is delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.
- Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Ground rules will be developed and shared with pupils as part of best practice. Ground rules help to ensure discussions and personal questions/comments are managed appropriately and sensitively, along with those questions which are more challenging.
- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- Taught content provides opportunities to revisit previous content and allows clear progression. Topics and lessons are carefully sequenced, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.
- The curriculum proactively addresses issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupils' development as well as their age.
- Groupings will be carefully considered by teachers and senior leaders (including the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate) - some classes may be taught in gender-specific groups, on a one to one basis or within a whole class setting - dependent on the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, the cultural, religious

or personal background of pupils, their age and SEND.

- All resources will be selected carefully – inappropriate/illegal images and videos will not be used in any circumstances and all related school policies will be followed.
- Care will be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of any pupil based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. children in care or young carers.
- There is an awareness that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and appropriate actions will be taken to mitigate this.
- There is a balance between teaching pupils about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online), whilst being clear it is never the fault of any child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong.
- It must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity and all pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner.
- Content related to LGBT+ is fully integrated into a range of topics, rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.
- There is a focus on challenging perceived derogatory views about the legally protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.
- Steps will be taken to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other protected characteristic.
- There is awareness of issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia, gender stereotypes, sexual violence and harassment, with positive action taken to build a school culture within which these are not tolerated.
- Awareness of the issues of sexting and youth produced sexual imagery are not taught in isolation and instead are taught as part of a developmental PSHE programme.

Working with other professionals

Working with external agencies can sometimes enhance our delivery of RSE, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. Examples might include a School Nurse or a representative from the NSPCC Speak Out/Stay Safe Programme. The school would only use visitors to enhance teaching provided by our school staff, not to replace it. Staff employed by the school will be present during any RSE session delivered by an external visitor commissioned by the school. It will be agreed with any visitor how confidentiality will work in any lesson and how safeguarding reports are to be dealt with in line with the school Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Where external experts are invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of RSE, they will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy. In line with the usual procedures and policies of our school, we will check the credentials of all external agencies and we will ensure the teaching delivered by any external experts fits with the planned curriculum and provisions of this policy. The school will discuss with the visitor the details of how they intend to deliver their sessions and ensure that content is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils. The school will request copies of the materials and lesson plans the visitor will use, to ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs.

Where a pupil has involvement from specialist external agencies, discussions between those agencies and appropriate senior staff in school, including the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), are important in order to ensure that RSE lessons are delivered in a way that is most appropriate for the individual child.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

At Ferndown Upper School, there is a focus on keeping our pupils safe, and the RSE curriculum plays an important role in our preventative education. All pupils are taught about keeping themselves safe, including how to stay safe online, as part of our over-arching curriculum.

The PSHE Lead will liaise with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in anything that is safeguarding-related within the context of RSE. The DSL is likely to have knowledge of trusted, high quality local resources that could be engaged, as well as knowledge of any particular local issues which may be appropriate to address in lessons. The DSL will liaise with the PSHE Lead about the circumstances of individual pupils if felt to be required and additional professional advice will be sought if needed as related to those pupils.

Our good practice allows pupils to have an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues and it is recognised that such discussions could lead to increased safeguarding reports. The school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures must be adhered to at all times and without exception, concerns or disclosures made within or as a result of RSE lessons must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Pupils are made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This includes processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer. Staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Impact and Assessment

The school has the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSE as for other curriculum areas. Our curriculum builds on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress.

Learning is assessed and assessments are used to identify where pupils need extra support, intervention or additional challenge. Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for RSE, teachers will assess all outcomes to capture progress. Strategies include assessment against the school's own assessment system, as well as additional tests/quizzes, written assignments, self/peer evaluations, use of structured questioning, mind-maps, presentations/role-play, pupil interviews and learning portfolios.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE Lead on an annual basis. As described earlier in this policy, parents and carers will be consulted about the policy and will have an opportunity to share their views. The policy will be available on the school's website and all stakeholders will be notified of any changes.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 2027.

APPENDIX 1

The school's curriculum is planned so that the key content is taught at the appropriate time for each pupil. The key content is outlined below and is provided within the *DfE's 2019 statutory guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education'*. This does not include related content taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science or related content taught as part of Health Education.

At secondary school, pupils should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary pupils and should also know:

Families

- 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 e.g. 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: 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 (e.g. 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 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 e.g. 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 use

online. Being safe

- 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
- 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, e.g. 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/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.