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Review period: biannually

Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School



Relationships and Sex Education Policy & Practice

Relationships and Sex Education Policy & Practice (Years 7 – 11)

Review period: every two years

As a secondary academy school we must provide Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. This policy is based on the Education Act (1996) and the Learning and Skills Act (2000). It also relates to the school's white paper "The Importance of Teaching" (2010). It relates also to the Equality Act 2010.

Section 1

Definitions

- RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.
- RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.
- RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Generally, it is

'...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'

DfEE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000.

RSE starts from the position that positive, caring environments are essential for the development of the individual and his or her self-image, and that one is in charge of and responsible for one's own body. It provides knowledge about the processes of reproduction and the nature of sexuality and relationships. It encourages the acquisition of skills and attitudes which allow students to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner. RSE has a vital part to play in achieving the historic Every Child Matters Staying Healthy strand, addressing a need for contraception and protection against sexually transmitted infections.

Context and Legal Obligations

The prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents. School recognises that parents are key figures in helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings. The teaching offered by school will be complementary and supportive to the role of parents. In an attempt to achieve this, the 1996 Education Act puts in place a statutory requirement that all students should be offered the opportunity of receiving a comprehensive, well-planned programme of RSE during their school career through a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at school and of society; and prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Schools also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and this must be available to parents. This document constitutes the current BRGS policy on Relationships and Sex Education.

Parental Rights

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the parts of the school's programme of RSE that is taught within the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum, but not from those elements which are required by what was the National Curriculum Science Order. Such parents should write to the Headmaster, stating their objections and the specific areas they would like their child withdrawn from. The teaching overviews (see later) indicate to parents the content which is to be covered.

However, parents should consider the importance of well-structured and delivered relationships and sex education with the context of PSHE.

Students that are withdrawn from the relationships and sex education aspects of PSHE are often also placed in an awkward position. Firstly, they miss lessons with their friends, which are part of their overall BRGS experience. Secondly, they may be questioned by their friends about why they have been missing PSHE lessons, which can put them in a difficult position when having to respond. Thirdly (and most significantly), students continue to talk about lesson content outside of lessons – so they will often hear about the subjects that have been studied from second hand sources. They still hear about the PSHE lessons, but from their friends who can easily start a “Chinese Whispers” method of communicating incorrect “facts”; they may embellish facts and may communicate information from their own particular bias – whereas gaining the information from within the lesson ensures students receive well thought through and effectively communicated information from a responsible adult – the teacher, not from another student.

Parents who write to the headmaster to request a withdrawal from the RSE elements of PSHE will subsequently be invited in to school to discuss the matter further. This would involve a meeting with the headmaster, the RSE coordinator and the PSHE coordinator. If concerns remain and the parent still wants to withdraw their child from RSE, alternative arrangements will be made for the student

Section 2

Objectives

Effective RSE:

- has at its heart the physical, emotional and moral development of our young people. The aim of this programme is to help them to treat others and themselves with respect in the crucial stages from childhood through adolescence to adulthood;
- gives information and support which will enable students to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives; this in turn will raise their standards and expectations;
- works together with other subjects to help the individual develop an understanding of, and an ability to cope with, moral, cultural, mental, physical and social issues. It enables them more readily to address difference and combat prejudice;
- makes students aware of the range of sexual attitudes and behaviour in present day society and recognises the importance of personal choice in managing relationships so that they do not present risks to health and personal safety. Practical advice is given on where further information on sexual health can be obtained;
- makes students aware that feeling positive about sexuality and sexual activity is important in relationships and that people have the right not to be sexually active.

Guidance

The DFEE guidance (2000) suggests that RSE should have three main elements, as follows:

Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development and the changing nature of sexuality over time and at appropriate stages and its impact on lifestyles.
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and a range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity; the benefits to be gained from such delay.
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.

- Learning about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and the upbringing of children, alongside other stable and mutually supportive relationships which form the cornerstone of the community and society.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Section 3

Delivery

The school's approach to RSE consists of:

- the taught Science Programme of Study
- RSE modules within each Key Stage delivered within a planned PSHE Education programme
- pastoral support for students who experience difficulties
- medical support and advice (in-house and access to wider services)
- provision of appropriate information through leaflets, books and other available materials.

While aspects of RSE are taught through biology and English, it is mainly delivered through PSHE. The teaching goes beyond simple biological functions to set RSE in a wider context of mutual relationships, self-esteem and responsibility for consequences. Delivery is tailored to the age and level of understanding and maturity of the students.

Throughout the course of teaching a variety of sensitive issues are inevitably explored. It is recognised that an individual's sexuality is a highly personal matter and so the teaching of RSE places stress upon the need for understanding and awareness of a variety of sexual preferences within the spectrum of human sexuality.

National Healthy Schools

At BRGS we recognise the National Healthy Schools' Programme as an effective vehicle to promote PSHE education which offers an integrated whole school approach, set alongside nationally agreed criteria, looking at health and wellbeing issues in their wider sense. School currently holds Lancashire's Healthy School status.

Morals and Values Framework

Our approach to RSE is conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships.
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views.
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships, based on mutual consent, rather than coercion.
- The right not to be abused by other people or be taken advantage of.
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.

We also believe that students have an entitlement to:

- age and circumstance appropriate RSE
- access to help from trusted (and vetted) adults and helping services.

RSE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The school's approach to RSE is balanced and takes account of, and is sensitive to, different viewpoints and is not based on personal bias. The approach is educational, rather than one based on propaganda and sensationalism.

Inclusion

'Mainstream and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in SRE. It should help all students understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'.

DfEE SRE Guidance, July 2000

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the school's approach to RSE will take account of:

The needs of boys as well as girls

Girls tend to have greater access to RSE than boys, both through the media, particularly teenage magazines, and the home. We consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that actively engage them. We are also proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

Ethnic and cultural diversity

Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school takes account of these views and promotes respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

Varying home backgrounds

We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home situation.

Sexuality and Orientation

On average, about 5% of our students will go on to define themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQ+). Students may also have LGBTQ+ parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with LGBTQ+ people. Our approach to RSE includes sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Our pastoral support takes account of the needs of LGBTQ+ students. We aim to promote a culture of care and respect and also actively tackle homophobic bullying.

Special educational needs

We take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RSE needs.

The teaching programme for RSE

We intend that all students should experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development.

Contraceptive advice at KS4

Students are taught, in the context of sexual intimacy and safer sex, that intercourse should always involve using a condom. Questions about forms of contraception are answered accurately and honestly within the student's ability to understand. If students need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support are sought from appropriate agencies and personnel. There is no statutory obligation with respect to provision at KS5, but the school nurse is proactive in supporting sixth-formers. She works with each tutor group and welcomes requests for advice. She is able to direct individuals discreetly to services offered by other agencies.

Section 4

A Whole School Approach

A whole school approach is adapted to RSE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding RSE. In particular:

- **The senior leadership team** endeavours to support the provision and development of RSE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.
- **The designated RSE co-ordinator** (Mr P. Reeves) works with those responsible for RSE curricular provision to maintain an overview of provision and has overall responsibility for its development. This includes keeping up to date with developments and good practice, accessing training, developing the provision to meet students' needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Teaching staff** - RSE is currently delivered by a specialist team, including staff who teach PSHE. Others teach elements of RSE through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding relationship and sex issues. Teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to RSE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.
- **Governors** have responsibilities for school policies. A designated governor (to be confirmed) has responsibility to oversee PSHE Education, including RSE and access appropriate training. The headmaster and the governing body will ensure policies reflect statutory guidelines, and are delivered in a sensitive and appropriate way.
- **Parents/carers** have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's RSE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their child from parts of the RSE taught within PSHE. The school seeks to adopt a partnership approach with parents.
- **The school nurse** (Mrs S. Baines) plays a key role in supporting the teacher in RSE both in terms of advice, input into lessons and provision of pastoral support for students and resources. Her expertise is invaluable in the links she has with external agencies – medical, local confidential advice services, screening services, etc. Further details of her role are to be found in Appendix D.
- **Outside agencies and speakers** are involved in inputting to RSE lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. The school only works with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. The school also promotes relevant helping agencies that students can access.
- **Students** have an entitlement to appropriate information and support. They are actively consulted about their RSE needs and their views are central to developing the provision.

The Taught RSE Programme

The RSE programme is delivered as part of the school's approach to PSHE Education and Citizenship.

The overall aims of the RSE programme are to:

- provide accurate information about, and understanding of, RSE issues
- dispel myths
- explore a range of attitudes towards RSE issues and to help students to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle
- develop respect and care for others
- increase students' self-esteem
- profile the dangers of sexting and online pornography
- understand key features such as puberty, menstruation, consent, contraception and abortion
- develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others contribute to a reduction in local and national teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.

The RSE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature. See Appendix A for details of the programme.

Delivery methods

A wide range of teaching methods are used that enable students to actively participate in their own learning. This includes the use of quizzes, case studies, research, role-play, circle-time, video, small group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers.

Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that students are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to students. See Appendix B for more information about answering students' questions.

Monitoring and evaluation of the programme

The views of students and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis.

Assessment

Students' progress in RSE is assessed as part of the PSHE assessment. Students' knowledge, skills and attitudes are assessed through a range of methods including teacher, peer and self assessment.

Pastoral Support for Students who Experience Difficulties

School takes its role in the promotion of student welfare seriously. All staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for students in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through the tutorial/pastoral system. They offer a listening ear and, where appropriate, information and advice. The school nurse offers a health and support service to students. Where appropriate, students are referred to the school nurse, to our counselling and/or outside helping agencies. The school keeps up to date about the development of local services and national help lines for young people, promotes their existence to students and endeavours to form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to student needs.

Section 5

Confidentiality and informing parents

We are aware that some parents find it hard to cope with their children's sexual development, and are happy for the school to take the initiative. School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if

approached by a student for help. All staff make this clear to students. For instance, safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made (see school Safeguarding policy).

It is very rare for a student to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving safeguarding issues staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. School is guided by our policy on Confidentiality and Information Sharing.

Dealing with bullying – See Appendix C

Section 6

Monitoring and Evaluation of the policy

It is accepted that it is difficult to provide definable criteria against which to measure the success of a policy which aims to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of young people. Nevertheless these values are of high significance and must be addressed in a valid way. It is important that the Senior Leadership Team monitor and review the policy every two years.

Further information:

- DfEE 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance', 2000.
- Ofsted, 2002, *Sex and Relationships*. Office for Standards in Education, London.
- Social Exclusion Unit, 1999, *Teenage Pregnancy Strategy*. Social Exclusion Unit, London.
- Taking the Initiative: positive guidance on SRE for Secondary Schools. SEF Factsheet 23.
- SRE Framework. SEF Factsheet 30.
- NAGB: SRE: Support for School Governors (NCB)
- SRE for the 21st Century

Appendix A – Delivery: Content and Organization

PSHE/Citizenship Co-ordinator: Mrs J Nelson

RSE is delivered by a specialist team: Mrs J Nelson, Mrs M Heywood, Mrs E Taylor, Mrs N Richardson

RE is also delivered by a specialist team: Mr A Whyte and Mrs M Heywood

Science is led by Mr A Wilkinsons

Overview of delivery of aspects of RSE

TOPIC	WHERE TAUGHT
YEAR 7 SYLLABUS	
Basic introduction to human development including menstruation, conception and foetal development and birth.	Science
Physiological and mental changes caused by adolescence.	Science
Puberty changes and periods. Puberty and cultural differences. Myths and facts associated with puberty. Changes: becoming a woman; becoming a man	Science PSHE
Relationship with peers and the changing nature of relationships with parents. Getting in touch with your feelings	PSHE
Marriage and wedding ceremonies in different religions and cultures including Islam, Christianity and Hinduism (family life and responsibilities).	RE
YEAR 8 SYLLABUS	
You and your body – contraception and safer sex.	PSHE

Changing relationships with parents – handling conflict. My Jihad – marriage.	PSHE
You and your family – dealing with divorce.	PSHE
YEAR 9 SYLLABUS	
Within e-safety: “sexting” and online grooming.	PSHE
YEAR 10 SYLLABUS	
Love, marriage and divorce. What makes a good relationship? Whose responsibility is contraception?	PSHE
AIDS; HIV; STIs.	PSHE Biology
Services provided in the local authority.	PSHE
Same sex relationships. Transgender and concerns.	PSHE
General health issues associated with teenage years. Where to get help.	PSHE Outside agencies
Muslim and Christian views on personal and social issues including marriage, sexuality and abortion. Human responsibility.	RE
Hormones and menstrual cycle. IVF and hormonal contraception.	Biology
Embryo transplants, genetic engineering, sexual and asexual reproduction.	Biology
Genetic engineering	Biology
YEAR 11 SYLLABUS	
Same sex relationships, homophobia, coping.	PSHE
Mental health issues.	PSHE
Love and sex.	PSHE DVD
Rape & pornography	PSHE
Importance of self-examination and where to get help.	PSHE
Genetic diseases – cystic fibrosis, Polydactyly. Sex determination. Inheritance of characteristics. Embryo screening.	Biology

Appendix B - Answering students' questions

School believes that students should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a student may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers use their skill and discretion to decide whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with students and by taking an approach that encourages students to be mature and sensible.

If a teacher does not know the answer to a question he acknowledges this and suggests that he and students research the answer to the question later. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers acknowledge it and attend to it later with the student who asked it. If a question is too personal, teachers remind students about the ground rules and if necessary point out appropriate sources of support. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse they then follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Appendix C - Dealing with bullying

(to be read in conjunction with Anti-bullying policy)

Bullying commonly includes inappropriate and hurtful comments and behaviours concerning sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues. The school takes the issue of bullying very seriously in line with DCSF 'Safe to Learn' Guidance 2007. This is reflected in the school's anti-bullying policy. Staff always challenge and deal sensitively with any evidence of bullying. Students are encouraged to report any incidents. Staff endeavour to investigate any incidents of bullying as soon as possible and

give feedback to students who complain of bullying. The RSE and PSHE programmes both consider bullying and aim to discourage bullying based on sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues.

Appendix D - Current practice

Mrs S Baines, school nurse:

Accessible, confidential advice and support on a range of issues:

- 1-1 advice / support / signposting / referrals
- Emergency contraception
- Pregnancy / termination
- Contraception (including issue of condoms to **Fraser Competent** young people under the age of 16)
- How to access appropriate services
- Physical resources

Working / liaising with outside agencies:

- Regular contact with Lancashire Care Sexual health Services
- Part of East Lancs operational multi-disciplinary team for teenage sexual health – attend monthly meetings, regular updates via e-mail
- Whole year 12 had tutorial sessions
- Promotion of safe sex
- Point of contact to arrange tutorial sessions / assembly sessions on aspects of sessions
- Positive health promotion / information
- Access to nurse-in-a-box services (for those unable to access normal clinic service)
- Best2know sexual health service