

# **Parklands High School An Academy**



## **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy**

First Implemented: November 2021

Next Review; June 2023

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## **Rationale and ethos**

This policy covers Parklands High School's approach to relationships and age-appropriate sex education in a rapidly changing social environment. In 2019 the government published new guidance about RSE (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education). This working policy is our response to these revised statutory guidelines. We have used the PHSE association guidelines, the Sex Education Forum's 'Twelve principles' of good quality RSE and parental and pupil consultation to create our approach to the effective and appropriate provision of RSE at Parklands and it is intended to demonstrate a clear understanding of the pressures, challenges and needs of our pupils.

The teaching of sex and relationships at Parklands aims to provide an understanding that positive, caring environments are needed for the development of a good self-image and are key building blocks of community and society;

- To make pupils aware of the value of respect and care for others;
- To make pupils aware of LGBT+ issues and to develop a respectful approach to individual differences;
- To provide knowledge about the processes of growth, development and reproduction;
- To help pupils develop the skills to be responsible for their own sexual health and safety;
- To emphasise the belief that sexual activity should take place only in a mature, meaningful relationship;
- To understand the benefits people get from delaying first sexual activity;
- To help pupils to develop attitudes which will help them to feel confident and happy about themselves, their sexuality and their relationships;
- To help pupils to recognise the influence of peer pressure and media pressure in issues relating to self-image, sex and relationships;
- To provide effective and unbiased guidance to pupils through any anxieties they may have, within the comfort range of the teaching member of staff;
- To make pupils aware of the services available to them in school and in the wider community, which provide practical advice on personal development, sexuality and sexual health.

We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in the same way as in all other curriculum areas, by quality first teaching, differentiation of resources and teacher support in the first instance. We also run complimentary programmes for targeted individuals as part of Secure through the Houseleaders, pastoral team, safeguarding team and Senco. These programmes include early intervention, rehabilitation and community involvement.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The RSE programme is led by Mrs Gray, who is the educational lead in school. She is responsible for ensuring that the intent, implementation and impact of the programme are consistent and clear to all staff members and that quality assurance is monitored.

RSE is taught by all members of the teaching staff who are supported by specialist working parties made up of 6-8 members of teaching staff with expertise and/or special interest in the different components that comprise PHSE. Each working party has access to specialist resources and training via the PSHE Association and The National College. Teaching staff receive RSE training in each area they deliver by these working parties in order to support pupils. Teaching staff are responsible for ensuring materials are accessible to their classes, in line with other curriculum areas.

The Headteacher is responsible for establishing, driving and supporting the ethos of the school and the team as laid out by the school vision statement.

The governing body delegates to the Headteacher the approval, revisions and reviews all policies within school.

We encourage and support parental and carer feedback in this aspect of the curriculum. We have carried out parental/carers consultation as part of the writing of this policy and will continue to listen to parental/carers concerns and feedback. We endeavour to supply information to parents and carers to enable them to engage with the topics their children are learning about and support their school learning at home. We encourage parents and carers to communicate any concerns they have.

## **Legislation (statutory regulations and guidance)**

We are required to teach relationships education/RSE as part of the Department for Education's statutory guidance of 2019 and this informs this policy. Current regulations and guidance from the Department for

Education state that under the Education Act 2002/Academies Act 2010 all schools must provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and in society
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019)
- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory
- Safeguarding Guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, but only for aspects of sex education which are not part of the Science curriculum (see **Engaging Stakeholders** below for more details). There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

## **Curriculum design**

Some of the content of the PSHE curriculum is embedded into curriculum subjects. For example, Science and RS. In addition to this, Parklands has a comprehensive curriculum plan for all other content not taught in this way. ([See Secure plan](#)) This is delivered in a variety of ways:

1. **RESPECT** days deal with specific RSE across all years in discrete, year group, non-timetabled days which are designed to be appropriate to the emotional development and maturity of each cohort. It is taught by trained, committed staff in a sensitive and positive way and is supported with specialist and expert delivery from Health Services and external providers who complement our own provision. On these days, pupils take part in a range of activities, from discussions to role-play to use of media and case studies.

2. **ASPIRE** lessons are project based learning where some aspects of the PSHE curriculum are delivered alongside skills development to ensure pupils get the opportunity to practise these skills over a more sustained period of time. This also allows pupils more time to reflect on their learning and progress.
3. **SECURE** vertical tutor sessions are mixed-age lessons. In these sessions, both timetabled lessons and in form time, issues that are less age-sensitive are delivered due to the range of ages of the pupils present. This is usually discussion based work but may take other forms.

We also utilise a number of other ways to ensure pupils are able to access the help and information they need. External agencies such as the school nurse are available in response to individual pupil needs, and they may also be asked to complement the school's own provision. Pastoral/tutorial/key support teams are also available to tackle individual/personal concerns. Discrete assemblies which value and respect differences in people's religion, culture, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability and background may be held for a variety of different year groups. The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of sex and relationship education in this school, pupils are taught according to the law of the land, not the opinions of stakeholders. Teachers will endeavour to answer difficult questions as honestly as possible, but reserve the right to refer the child back to their parent/carer, school health advisor or drop-in centre.

## **Safe and effective practice**

To ensure high quality and effective planning and delivery of RSE lessons, all staff are able to access high quality training materials from the PSHE Association and The National College. Working parties are responsible for the creation of resources in one area only, allowing staff to develop expertise and fully immerse themselves into their topic of choice. These working parties support additional staff to deliver the sessions as necessary. In addition to this, the PSHE lead delivers training to all staff about key principles for safe and effective delivery, including:

- How teachers can establish a safe learning environment
- What ground rules are needed for RSE
- Why is it important to 'distance' the topic from the pupil
- How pupils' questions will be answered
- How potentially sensitive or controversial issues will be managed
- How pupils can raise questions anonymously
- How to deal with disclosures which may become child protection issues (In accordance with these cases, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed in line with the school's safeguarding procedures - see below.)

## **Safeguarding**

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. In the event that this happens during a session, the classroom teacher has a legal duty of care to consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Fairhurst, and in her absence the deputy, Mrs Aspinall.

Visitors and external agencies which support the delivery of RSE are required to show their DBS certificate and the protocol for inviting visitors into lessons is to only allow these persons into the classroom accompanied by Parklands' staff.

All visitors and external agencies involved in the delivery of the PSHE curriculum are required to read our RSE and safeguarding policies beforehand and abide by them. In addition, external visitors are only used to complement our existing provision.

Pupils may be identified by pastoral staff as being particularly vulnerable in certain areas of the Secure programme. When this happens, these pupils are removed from the general lessons and placed into a smaller, more targeted group to help with their particular issues instead.

## **Engaging stakeholders**

**Parents** - We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context for all RSE and we would like to work in partnership with parents and carers. Parents are able to access the entire SECURE curriculum model on the school website, alongside this policy. Parents will also be informed via the weekly Parklands Bulletin of upcoming Respect days and PSHE topics in Secure and Aspire. Alongside these notices, we will endeavour to provide signposting to further resources for help and support to empower parents to follow up the RSE work in the home. Parental input into the curriculum is welcomed. We have recently sent a parental consultation document to all parents and carers about the revision of our provision and will continue to consult parents throughout the year about the changes we are making in this way. Additionally, parents and carers who have indicated they would be willing in this survey are being invited to parental forums for more information and to air their views in person.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from all or part of any RSE provided, with the exception of the biological aspects included in the National Curriculum for Science. Before granting any such request, the Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Batson and the PSHE lead, Mrs Gray will discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. School will document this process to ensure a record is kept. The school will want to discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the Headteacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

**Pupils** - It is essential that the RSE delivery is relevant and age-appropriate to the cohorts taking part. As such, we believe it is of the utmost importance to engage pupils in RSE. We will do this in a number of ways. Firstly, regular pupil voice sessions will ensure pupils can effectively contribute to RSE content. These will take the form of small group conversations as well as whole cohort questionnaires. Additionally, we will make use of a PSHE blind question box to enable pupils to ask questions anonymously. Throughout the year we will utilise evaluations of work completed and surveys which seek pupil responses. Pupil voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of pupils. We will also put questions on the Yr 11 Exit survey to evaluate our success.

**Governors** - Will be kept up to date through the Headteacher's report and in governor's meetings by updates from Mrs Gray. Mrs Kinnaird is the link governor with specific oversight of the Secure curriculum.

## **Monitoring, reporting and evaluation**

RSE provision and content will be monitored on an ongoing basis, inline with the expectations Parklands has for all other curriculum areas. This means the curriculum leader will be responsible for the consistency and quality of the provision. This will be monitored by learning tours, work scrutiny, pupil voice and staff discussions.

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through regular meetings of their working parties where review and revision of resources and planned learning activities will take place taking into consideration classroom experience, pupil/parent/carers voice and the changing needs of our school community.

Pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons and over time through a combination of assessment and re-visiting topics over their five years with us.

## **RSE policy review date**

This policy is owned by and will be monitored and updated in line with any changes to the curriculum or national guidance by the person who is responsible for leading this programme as mentioned in the section 'Roles and responsibilities' or in the absence of any updates will be next reviewed in June 2023.