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Rayner Stephens High School
Relationship and Sex Education Policy

February 2024

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1 Rationale

Rayner Stephens High School fully recognises its responsibility to provide statutory Relationship and Sex Education that prepares students to lead safe, fulfilling and enjoyable lives.

Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 provides for Relationships and Sex education to be taught in all schools in England. Following consultation, the RSE proposals are intended to be in place for teaching to start in September 2020.

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- 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)

Relationship and Sex education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

Topics covered in RSE can be attributed to the following areas of study, as categorised by the Department for Education:

- Intimate and Sexual Relationships (inc Sexual Health)
- Families
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful Relationships
- Online Relationships and Media
- Internet Safety and Harms

High quality RSE helps create safe school communities in which students can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:

- Children and young people have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships.
- RSE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding obligations.
- Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their students' wellbeing, and under the Education Act (1996) to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

2 Relationship and Sex Education at Rayner Stephens High School:

- is a partnership between home and school;
- ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence age-appropriate lesson planning and teaching;
- includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values;

- has allocated time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships (including friendship, familial and intimate), consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services;
- helps students understand on and offline safety, consent and exploitation;
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience;
- helps students understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the different messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media;
- teaches students about the law and their rights and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations.
- promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs.
- promotes better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships.
- aims to help students keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice.

3 Delivery and Monitoring

Relationship and Sex Education is primarily delivered through the timetabled fortnightly PSHE lessons, which also includes Health Education; Citizenship and CEIAG. This element of the curriculum is delivered primarily by the Form Tutor. In addition to this, aspects of RSE are included in the schemes of work for other subjects such as Science, Humanities, Food Tech, PE, ICT, English and Drama. The group readers chosen for DEAR time in the form tutor curriculum also support PSHE themes and have been carefully selected by the Literacy Coordinator and the Director of SMSC. Furthermore, there are fortnightly themed assemblies and visiting speakers to Rayner Stephens High School that also enhance the teaching of Relationship and Sex Education. The school works with a wide variety of local and national organisations including The School Nurse Service; Tameside Safeguarding Board; Tough Cookies Education; Early Help Service; The Educational Psychologist; Tameside Youthink Team; Tameside Sexual Health Team; CGL.

Training is provided for teachers as necessary to support them and to ensure content and methodology are in line with current guidelines and best practice. Overall responsibility for the RSE programme is taken by a member of the Rayner Stephens High School Leadership Team. Details of the PSHE programmes of study (incorporating RSE) are published and updated via the Rayner Stephens High School website.

Staff delivering RSE will have access to high quality resources to aid their planning and teaching, however they will be given freedom and flexibility to tailor lessons to the needs of their cohort. The Rayner Stephens High School Leadership Team will regularly review and evaluate the curriculum, resources and teaching of RSE, and will address any areas of concern swiftly.

Rayner Stephens High School will ensure a safe learning environment by guiding teachers and students to agree ground rules before the delivery of any potentially difficult topics within RSE. Teachers and students will be encouraged to use distancing techniques in explanations and questioning. Students' questions will be answered by the classroom teacher in the first instance, although teachers will be encouraged to seek further clarification from the Rayner Stephens High School Leadership Team member with responsibility for RSE, if necessary. All staff teaching RSE will be supported by the safeguarding team, Head of House, The Hive Centre and Associate Assistant Head for Personal Development.

The impact of RSE at Rayner Stephens High School is monitored through learning walks, day to day management or communication with colleagues and students, and student/parent voice.

Students' knowledge and understanding is assessed through classroom discussion and low-stakes assessment activities, encouraging reflection on their own learning and progress, where possible. Application of knowledge and skills will be actively encouraged as part of wider school participation, resolving conflict, making decisions and forming positive relationships. Student voice will be influential in adapting and amending the material for RSE to ensure it is up-to-date and relevant.

4 Confidentiality

Rayner Stephens High School's work in Relationship and Sex Education will result in sensitive issues being discussed, either with groups of students or with individuals. We will:

- reassure students that their best interests will be maintained;
- encourage students to talk to their parents/carers and provide support in this if necessary;
- ensure that students are aware that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality;
- inform students that if an external agency needs to be informed, they will be told first and supported appropriately;
- pursue the Child Protection guidelines and procedures if there is any possibility of abuse;
- ensure that students are informed of sources of confidential help.

5 Inclusion

5.1 Ethnic and Cultural Groups

The Policy is sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items. The Rayner Stephens High School will respond to parental requests and concerns. Any requests or concerns must be put in writing to the Any requests or concerns must be put in writing to the Associate Assistant Head for Personal Development via j.heap@rshs.spt.org.uk.

5.2 Learners with Special Needs

Rayner Stephens High School will ensure that all young people receive relationship and sex education and will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all students, taking specialist advice where necessary. When delivering RSE to SEND students, Rayner Stephens High School will be mindful of:

- The SEND Code of Practice, which includes a set of outcomes on preparing students for adulthood.
- The additional vulnerability that SEND students can face, to exploitation, bullying and other issues.
- The possibility that elements of RSE may be particularly important for some SEND students, because of the nature of a condition or disability.
- The potential need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of SEND students at different developmental stages.

5.3 Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

Rayner Stephens High School aims to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that relationship and sex education is relevant to them.

5.4 The Use of Outside Visiting Speakers and Health Professionals

Visitors will only take part in sex education lessons with the agreement of the Senior Leadership link for sex education. Visitors are made fully aware of Rayner Stephens High School's RSE Policy. All visitors are subject to the school's Safeguarding Policy.

5.5 The Right of Parents to Withdraw their Child from Sex Education

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from sex education except from those elements that are in the National Curriculum for science. Requests should be made in writing, to the Headteacher via m.davies@rshs.spt.ac.uk. Parents are not obliged to give their reasons for wishing to withdraw their child, but are encouraged to discuss the matter with a senior member of staff. The sex education component of the RSE Curriculum are those areas covered in the "Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health."

Should a parent/carer request that their child be withdrawn, they will be invited into school for a meeting with a member of the Rayner Stephens High School Leadership team, where we will endeavour to:

- Clarify the nature, purpose and intended benefits of the RSE Curriculum.
- Explain the potential risks of withdrawing a child, including the social and emotional risks of being excluded and the possibility of hearing about sex education elements of the RSE Curriculum from other students, rather than a qualified adult.

These discussions should be noted, and withdrawal requests will be documented on CPOMS. When a student is withdrawn from the non-statutory areas of sex education, they will be given alternative work.

The process to request to withdraw students from the sex education components of the RSE Curriculum is the same for SEND students. However, in exceptional circumstances the Headteacher may want to take the specific needs of a SEND student into account when making this decision.

Requests will be granted unless exceptional circumstances exist.

6 E-Safety - Use of Internet Facilities, Mobile and Digital Technologies

The Rayner Stephens High School expects all staff and students to use the Internet, mobile and digital technologies responsibly and strictly according to the conditions below.

Users shall not visit Internet sites, make, post, download, upload or pass on, material, remarks, proposals or comments that contain or relate to:

- 1) Indecent images of children.
- 2) Other indecent images.
- 3) Promoting illegal acts.
- 4) Any other information which may be offensive to peers or colleagues e.g. abusive images; promotion of violence.

Rayner Stephens High School recognises that in certain planned curricular activities, access to otherwise deemed inappropriate sites may be beneficial for educational use. In such circumstances, there is an expectation that access is pre-planned and recorded.

Incidents which appear to involve deliberate access to websites, newsgroups and online groups that contain the following material will be reported to the Police:

- 1) Images of child abuse (images of children whether they are digital or cartoons, apparently under 16 years old, involved in sexual activity or posed to be sexually provocative);
- 2) Adult material that potentially breaches the Obscene Publications Act in the UK;

3) Other criminal activity.

Rayner Stephens High School regularly monitors websites that have been visited and student emails. The responsibility of monitoring will be the Trust Network Manager. The Senior Leadership Team and Rayner Stephens High School's Safeguarding Protection Officer will be informed if there are any concerns with students.

7 Links to other policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour for Learning
- Anti-Bullying
- E-Safety
- Student ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Parents are invited to discuss this policy, or any aspects of RSE at Rayner Stephens High School, with the designated member of the Rayner Stephens High School Leadership Team for RSE, and should contact the Rayner Stephens High School for an appointment if necessary. This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Headteacher and governors.

8 Reference materials:

- http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/gillick_wda61289.html
- <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/content.aspx?CategoryID=1182&ArticleID=1127>

9 Useful links for parents/carers:

- <http://www.brook.org.uk/>
- <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/home.aspx>
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/SexRelationships/Pages/SexRelationships.aspx>