

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

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INTRODUCTION

Relationships and Sexuality Education (hereinafter ‘RSE’) pertains to the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils; in essence, it involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity at age-appropriate levels. The subject comprises a combination of the sharing of information and the exploration of issues and values, but emphatically does not promote of sexual activity.

RSE forms part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (‘PSHE’) curriculum at Rydal Penrhos, and this document should be read in conjunction with the School’s PSHE Policy.

AIMS

The aims of the RSE programme at Rydal Penrhos are to:

- provide a framework within which sensitive discussions can take place;
- prepare pupils for puberty, and to give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene;
- help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy;
- create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships;
- teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies;
- equip the pupils with the skills and knowledge to make responsible choices as they grow up;
- appreciate the consequences and risks of sexual activity;
- understand the legal context of sexual behaviour;
- know how to find appropriate advice on sexual health and wellbeing.

COMPLIANCE

Rydal Penrhos School has a statutory duty under section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Under this duty, the School follows the guidance set out in:

- <https://gov.wales/curriculum-wales-relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse-code> (2022)
- Relationships and Sexuality Education in Schools (Welsh Government, February 2019);
- Challenging Bullying – Rights, Respect, Equality: Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools (Welsh Government, November 2019).

The Curriculum for Wales – Relationships and Sexuality Education Code (2021) states that:

‘The Welsh Government committed to covering the following themes in RSE: relationships; rights and equity; sex, gender and sexuality; bodies and body image; sexual health and well-being; and violence, safety and support. Across the learning strands, curriculum content in RSE must be inclusive and reflect diversity. It must include learning that develops learners’ awareness and understanding of different identities, views and values and a diversity of relationships, gender and sexuality, including LGBTQ+ lives.’

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES

In the present context, reference could usefully be made to the following School policies:

• Additional Learning Needs Policy;	• Health and Safety Policy;
• Anti-Bullying Policy;	• Internet & Acceptable Use Policy;
• Attendance Policy;	• PSHE Policy;
• Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy;	• Safeguarding & Child Protection
• Equal Opportunities Policy;	
• E-Safety Policy;	

CURRICULUM

The School’s RSE Curriculum follows the Code set out in Appendix 1. It has been developed taking into account the age, needs and feelings of differing age-groups of pupils. If pupils ask questions beyond the scope of this policy, their teachers will respond in an appropriate manner such that they are fully informed and do not feel the need to seek answers online.

Prep Section:

In respect of sex education, the Prep Section RSE curriculum will focus on preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings. Linking with the science curriculum pupils will also be taught about sexual reproduction in humans and the main stages of pregnancy.

Relationships education focuses upon teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including:

- families and people who care for the child;
- caring friendships;
- respectful relationships;
- online relationships;
- being safe.

Senior Section:

RSE in the Senior Section focuses upon giving young people the information they need in order to help them to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- families;
- respectful relationships, including friendships;
- online and media;
- being safe;
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

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 (for example, families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents / carers, amongst other structures); at the same time, the programme will reflect sensitively the fact that some children may have a different support structure around them (for example, children who are looked after, or young carers).

DELIVERY OF RSE

Much of the RSE programme is taught as part of the PSHE curriculum at Rydal Penrhos, while the biological areas of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum, and certain aspects are included in Religious Studies lessons.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Governors:

The Board of Governors will delegate the approval of this policy to its Learning Committee.

The Principal:

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the School, and will delegate the management of requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory components of RSE to the appropriate Deputy Principal at either the Prep Section or the Senior Section, as appropriate.

Staff:

Staff are responsible for:

- delivering RSE in a sensitive way;
- modelling positive attitudes to RSE;
- monitoring progress;
- responding to the needs of individual pupils;
- responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE.

Staff who are timetabled to teach RSE but who have concerns about teaching the subject are encouraged to discuss the matter with their Line Manager or the Head of Faculty.

In the Prep Section, Form Teachers are responsible for the delivery of PSHE and RSE with their form groups, with the support of Science teachers and healthcare professionals, as required.

In the Senior Section, PSHE and RSE are delivered by the PSHE Leader, the Pastoral Leads and another specialist colleague, with the support of Science teachers and healthcare professionals as required.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to the subject, will treat others with due respect and sensitivity.

PARENTAL RIGHT TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILD FROM RSE

‘RSE will be a mandatory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales for all learners from age 3 to 16 (‘the Act’). This means that all learners must receive this education. There is no right to withdraw from RSE in the new curriculum.’ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-05/consultation-document-relationships-and-sexuality-education-guidance-and-code_0.pdf

STAFF TRAINING

As part of their induction to the teaching programme at Rydal Penrhos, the appropriate staff are trained in the delivery of RSE, and the subject is included in the School’s continuing professional development calendar. The PSHE Coordinator will also invite visitors from outside the School, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Deputy Principal at the Prep Section and the PSHE Leader in the Senior School by means of planning scrutiny, learning walks, listening to the pupil voice, team teaching activities, etc.

This policy is subject to review by the Deputy Principals at the Prep and Senior Sections and the PSHE Leader on a biennial basis; however, it may require earlier revision in the light of any regulatory change which may come into force in the interim.

Adopted (GB):	January 2023
Review date:	January 2025

APPENDIX 1: Welsh Government Curriculum for RSE

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-01/curriculum-for-wales-relationships-sexuality-education-code.pdf>