



Highlands School

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Date of Last Review	Oct '18
Next Review Due	Oct '20
Governors Committee	C&S

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

What is Relationship and Sex Education?

According to the statutory Department for Education guidance for sex and relationships education (2000) it is about the understanding of the importance of marriage in family life, parenthood, stable and loving relationships, respect, love, care and sex. The objective of relationships and sex education (RSE) is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. Effective RSE is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. Relationships and sex education should be firmly embedded in the Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHEE) curriculum, in order to help young people respect themselves and others and develop with confidence from adolescence to adulthood. Relationships and sex education does not encourage early sexual experimentation. RSE teaches young people to understand human sexuality and the reasons for delaying sexual activity.

How is the RSE at Highlands School organised and delivered?

The school aims to provide high quality relationships and sex education. We aim to teach the subject in a sensitive manner, which will reflect the cultural, religious and social mix of the school, and in consultation with students, parents and staff. The school has a duty to ensure that the policy is inclusive of all students, and that young people with Special Educational Needs and learning difficulties are properly included in relationships and sex education. In addition, young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that relationships and sex education is relevant to them and sensitive to their concerns.

Relationships and sex education is delivered mainly within discrete Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHE education) lessons, with the statutory biological aspects being covered within Science and some aspects also being covered within Religious Education lessons and GCSE Child Development. There is progression in the programme –from Year 7 to Year 10 with resources being carefully selected to reflect the growing maturity of the students. Lessons are carefully pre-planned, materials reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Extensive support and training will continue to be offered to teachers to allow them to deliver the programme sensitively and effectively. Training will be delivered either by staff within the school or by external trainers.

Teachers are expected to work within the policy guidelines. Where outside agencies are invited to contribute to the RSE at Highlands School we expect them to be familiar with, and supportive of the school's RSE policy.

What about safeguarding and confidentiality issues?

Effective relationships and sex education (RSE), which brings an understanding of healthy relationships, can sometimes lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. If a member of the school's staff (teaching or non-teaching) suspects that the student is a victim of abuse or they have reason to believe that he or she is at risk of abuse, they should report their concerns to the staff member responsible for safeguarding in line with the agreed school Safeguarding policy.

Teachers must ensure that students know that they cannot be offered unconditional confidentiality and that students are reassured that if confidentiality has been broken, that they will be informed first and then supported as appropriate. Students that feel comfortable discussing such matters with their parents or carers should be encouraged and supported in doing so. Students can be informed of sources of confidential help e.g. school nurse, counsellor, GP or local young person's advice service. Ground rules must be set by teachers and others within the classroom situation to ensure appropriate confidentiality.

Specific information for parents

An annual letter informing parents and carers of the teaching of RSE is sent out by student-post in advance of the unit next being taught. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of relationships and sex education (RSE) provided at school, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum. The school will make alternative arrangements in such cases and other PSHEE or Citizenship work will be set at these times.

The policy is available on the school website for parents to access as well as further information about the teaching of Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education. Parents are given opportunity to discuss the policy and teaching of RSE with PSHEE teaching staff during open evenings and parent's evenings.,

Specific information for teachers & health professionals working at Highlands School

Teachers must be able to answer appropriate questions sensitively and honestly and offer support or to direct students to appropriate support and guidance. They must be able to determine whether to answer questions as a whole class, small group or individual level depending on the maturity of the class and context of the question. When a student selects a teacher to ask such questions they are demonstrating that they trust that teacher and so that adult must ensure that they support that student in getting the information and guidance they need.

Accordingly a teacher approached by an individual student for specific advice on contraception or other aspects of sexual behaviour will wherever possible, encourage the student to seek advice from their parents, and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service agency. Where the circumstances are such as to lead the teacher to believe that the student has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place them at moral or physical risk or in breach of the law, the teacher has a general responsibility to ensure that the student is aware of the implications and is urged to seek advice as above. In such circumstances, the teacher should inform the member of staff responsible for Safeguarding. If appropriate, arrangements should then be made for the student to be counselled.

Teachers have an overriding responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their students. Sexual relationships involving children under 16 are a criminal offence. A sexual relationship between a teacher and any student under the age of 18 in the same school is a criminal offence and is in breach of their position of trust. This will result in disciplinary action, often dismissal, by the employer and may also lead to the teacher being barred from further employment in the education service by the Secretary of State.

Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality. When working in a classroom situation, they are also bound by relevant school policies. They must protect privacy in a classroom setting by negotiating ground rules.

School nurses can give one to one advice and information to a student on health related matters, including contraception and use their professional judgement to decide whether a

young person is mature enough to consent to medical treatment, including contraceptive treatment.