



NORTHGATE
High School

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Respect | Determination | Teamwork

Review period: Biennial

Review by: Mr J Tunaley

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Next Review: October 2022

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

1. Aims and Principles

1.1 Definition

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is about helping young people develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like, what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful committed relationship. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

Our students are living in a vastly complex world and living their lives both off and online. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. Our aim at Northgate High School, is to ensure that in this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Relationship Education will become compulsory in April 2021 for all secondary schools. The topics covered within the RSE curriculum are wide-ranging and this policy is designed to outline the purpose and content of RSE, whilst ensuring that the compulsory subject content is age and developmentally appropriate. At Northgate, we aim to teach RSE sensitively and inclusively, with respect to different backgrounds and beliefs of students and parents while always with the objective of providing students with the knowledge they need of the law and the legal implications of their actions.

There are 5 main elements to RSE:

- Personal Identity
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Risk
- Relationships
- Diversity

As per National Curriculum Statutory Guidance 2020.

1.2 Aims of Relationship and Sex Education

- To help and support students through their physical, emotional and moral development.
- To help students learn to respect themselves and others.
- To give students the skills and understanding they need to move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.
- To reduce or delay sexual activity and reduce teenage pregnancy.
- To reduce the incidence of STIs including HIV/AIDS.

1.3 Key Principles

- It is a legal requirement that all schools have an RSE policy. The policy must be available to parents for inspection upon request. The Governing Body is responsible for developing the policy whilst taking into account the culture of the community the school serves.
- All students have an equal entitlement to RSE.
- Relationship Education is now compulsory in all schools although parents and carers still have a right to withdraw students from specific sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, will be granted up to three terms before a child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.
- The RSE programme is firmly embedded in the PSHEE framework.
- The effective delivery of RSE is part of the Northgate High Schools Healthy Schools programme.
- The overall responsibility for drawing up this policy lies with the Governing Body and Headteacher, who will take into account the views of other stakeholders.
- Staff will receive confident training and support so that they feel confident to deliver the programme.
- The RSE programme forms one of the themes of Northgate's Healthy Schools Standard (Oct 2011).
- The RSE policy and programme of study is in accordance with the National Curriculum Statutory PSHEE programme of study for both KS3 and KS4 (National Curriculum Guidance 2019 ready for 2020) and the law.

2. The Provision

2.1 RSE is delivered through the PSHEE and Citizenship framework. The teaching and materials will be appropriate to the age and sensitive to the cultural background of the children concerned.

The RSE programme involves:

- a) Discrete time – timetabled PSHEE lessons
- b) Specified Science lessons in Year 7 (National Curriculum in England: Science programmes of study 6 May 2015 statutory guidance)
- c) Cross curricular reinforcement in subjects like RE, Humanities and English
- d) Guest speakers e.g. Theatre in Education groups, charity representatives, etc.
- e) Assemblies
- f) Tutor time during registration
- g) Extra-curricular time e.g. Friendship Club, self-esteem group and PALS

2.2 The RSE programme in Year 7 will be taught alongside the National Curriculum Science topic (see the Science programme of study). In other year groups the RSE is not linked specifically to a Science topic but will relate to it.

3 Guidelines on Teaching Relationship and Sex Education

3.1 Sex education should be set within a broader base of self-esteem and responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.

Teaching should:

- Focus on relationships, love, commitment and the responsibilities of parenthood as well as sex
- Focus on boys and young men as well as girls and young women
- Build self-esteem
- Teach the taking on of responsibility and consequences of one's actions, in relation to sexual activity and parenthood
- Provide information and contraception and where to access further information and advice
- Use students as peer educators where possible e.g. teenage mothers to enhance the understanding of the full implications of early parenthood
- Give a clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure
- Link RSE to other issues of peer pressure like drugs, drinking and smoking
- Understand that students understand the law and how it applies to sexual relationships
- Take account of cultural sensitivities
- Deal with homophobic bullying
- Not be a promotion of sexual orientation, gender assignment or sexual activity

3.2 Teaching and Learning Styles

A variety of teaching approaches will be used to take into account the different preferred learning styles, different needs and differences in physical and emotional maturity of our students. These approaches might include:

- DVD/Videos will be used to introduce topics, issues and discussion points.
- Visual/Audio/Kinesthetic (active learning).
- Think, pair, share (discussion in pairs, groups and whole class).
- Role play will be used to explore issues where appropriate.
- Poster design.
- Quizzes and knowledge or confidence testers.
- Reflection on what has been learned.

3.3 Teaching Strategies

3.3.1 It is good practice to set out ground rules to help create a safe environment in which students do not feel anxious or embarrassed by ensuring the following:

- a) Teachers and health professionals do not have to answer personal questions

- b) No students will be forced to take part in discussions/answer questions
- c) Students will be encouraged to use the correct names for body parts
- d) Meaning of words will be explained in a factual way

3.3.2 Teachers will use distancing techniques which involve de-personalising discussions and using role play to ‘act out’ situations.

3.3.3 Teachers will be given training and advice on how to respond to difficult situations. The ground rules should reduce the chance of a difficult personal question being asked. If a question is asked that is that is too personal or too explicit then the teacher should:

- a) Acknowledge the question and promise to speak to the student later, on an individual basis and/or
- b) In consultation with the progress director/safeguarding lead/head of school refer the student to an appropriate agency – school nurse, helpline or school counsellor.

4 Specific Issues When Teaching Relationship and Sex Education

4.1 Teachers are in a position of trust and are expected to work within the parameters of this document.

4.2 Teachers must be aware of the school Safeguarding Policy as the teaching of RSE may raise the sensitive issue of child abuse. Joint guidance by the DfES “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (pub. July 2018) sets out how all agencies should work together to promote children’s welfare and protect them from abuse and neglect.

4.3 Confidentiality – disclosures from students may take place and they should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained. They will be encouraged to talk to their parents or guardians. They should be reassured that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and supported where appropriate. If there is a child protection issue the teacher will inform the designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection. (See Safeguarding Children Policy, November 2019)

4.4 The teaching of contraception is an essential part of the Government’s strategy to reduce teenage pregnancy. RSE staff should give students information about different types of contraception and should give additional information about where they can obtain advice and counselling, on an individual basis.

4.5 At Northgate, we understand the importance for schools to reduce/delay sexual activity and to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy through the teaching of RSE. National and local statistics should be used as the basis of discussion. In discussing the moral issues, the religious convictions of students and their parents or guardians should be respected.

4.6 STIs including HIV and AIDs – the teaching about safer sex is one of the Government’s strategies for reducing the incidence of STIs including HIV/AIDs. It is vital to give students appropriate information and knowledge about HIV/AIDs. In addition to information, students need to develop the skills to enable them to make sensible choices. This will link to peer pressure and other risk taking behaviour such as drugs and alcohol. (See Drugs Policy, 2020)

5 The Role of Parents and Guardians and The Community

5.1 Research shows that children and young people want to receive their initial sex and relationship education from their parents and families with schools building on this later. However, many parents find it difficult to talk to their children about these issues and fathers rarely take responsibility for giving RSE to their sons.

5.2 Teaching of some aspects of RSE by teachers might nevertheless be of particular concern to some parents. Parents may need to be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of RSE. All the teaching of RSE should be within the agreed values and framework of the policy and the Government framework for PSHEE.

5.3 Year 7 parents will be informed by a letter before the RSE programme in PSHEE and the KS3 Science topic on reproduction are scheduled to start.

5.4 Relationship education is now compulsory in all schools although parents and guardians still have a right to withdraw students from specific sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, will be granted up to three terms before a child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent. Furthermore, parents will not have the right to withdraw students from those parts included in the statutory Science NC.

5.5 The wider community will be involved at different times. Health professionals, particularly the school nurse, have a role to play and may work with teachers in delivering some aspects of RSE. The nurse supported by the Suffolk Community Healthcare team will also provide support in the form of a ‘drop-in’ session for students once

a week. As a professional she will follow the Suffolk Community Healthcare guidelines and keep within the remit of the 'Information for Schools' document. Peer educators may also be involved at times, to complement the RSE programme in school.

5.6 It is essential that the teacher is present at all times if a visitor contributes to the delivery of RSE.

6 Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with other school policies by a designated member of SMT in conjunction with stakeholders.

