



Achievement for all

Sherburn High School



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Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Adopted/Reviewed: July 2024

Date of Next Review: July 2027

SHERBURN HIGH SCHOOL

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2024-2027

Local and National Guidance:

This policy has been written in consultation with the following guidance:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019)
- National Curriculum in England (DfE, updated July 2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, updated June 2019)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (DfE, November 2018)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (DfE, 2012)
- Equality Act 2010 and Schools (Gov. Equalities Office & Equality and Human Rights Commission, April 2010)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE & DfHSC, updated May 2015)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE, updated November 2018)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools) (DfE, updated July 2017)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (DfE, updated May 2018)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (DfE, Nov. 2014)
- National Citizen Service guidance for schools
- Ofsted Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (Ofsted, June 2021)

This policy is a working document. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Clarify the legal requirement and responsibilities of the school
- Clarify the school's approach to Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education for all staff, pupils, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- Provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school RSE programme
- Reinforce the role of the school in contributing to local and national strategies.

Introduction:

Relationships and Sex Education at Sherburn High School addresses the following problems:

- The UK has the highest teenage birth rate in western Europe
- The rate is highest in the most economically disadvantaged communities and amongst the most vulnerable young people
- More than half of under 16s use no form of contraception the first time they have sex
- Early sexual experiences tend to be linked to risky behaviour with alcohol and other drugs
- Lack of knowledge and media pressures are often cited as explanations for the number of teenage pregnancies
- Increased risks of sexting which affects young people the most
- Risks associated with social media and young people being contacted by strangers.

- The prevalence of peer-on-peer sexual harassment and sexual violence (including online), in their lives and the lives of their peers.

The following policy is an integral part of the general package of school policies relating to student health and well-being, and particularly the associated policies for drugs, alcohol and tobacco education and teenage pregnancy. It is also to be read in conjunction with the child protection procedures.

Relationships and Sex Education is delivered as part of the Curriculum and tutorial offer in which PSHCEe (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education) is addressed.

What is Relationships and Sex Education?

The term Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is used in this policy rather than Sex Education. This is to stress that the approach goes beyond the provision of biological information and addresses 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. According to DfE guidance, RSE allows students to ‘...embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, [by enabling students] to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy.’ (DfE, ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education’, 2019)

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. Older students frequently say that sex and relationships education was ‘too little, too late and too biological’.
- RSE plays a vital part in meeting schools’ safeguarding obligations. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables students to learn about safety and risks in relationships
- 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. A comprehensive RSE programme can have a positive impact on students’ health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.

Aims:

The RSE programme at Sherburn High School reflects the school ethos and demonstrates the following values:

- Ambition - for yourself and for those you interact with

- Respect - both respect for others and respect for yourself
- Community - acting and behaving in a way that supports those in our community

In addition, Sherburn High School believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process.
- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Encourage every student to contribute.
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and caring for each other.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with other health and education professionals.

Three Main Elements:

1. Attitudes and values
2. Personal and social skills
3. Knowledge and understanding

A fuller account of what exactly constitutes each of the above elements can be found in Appendix One.

The overall aims of the RSE programme at Sherburn High School are to provide balanced, factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health.

Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

1. Dispel myths.
2. Explore a range of attitudes towards RSE issues and reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle. They will develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgments and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and have respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
3. Develop respect and care for others.
4. Develop skills relevant to the effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help, helping others and understanding the need to report peer-on-peer sexual abuse and sexual harassment to ensure that such behaviour is not normalised.
5. Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.
6. Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.

7. Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
8. Develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity.
9. Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and the reasons for having protected sex.
10. Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections.
11. Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
12. Know how the law applies to sexual relationships, including what constitutes peer-on-peer sexual abuse and sexual harrassment.

Content and Delivery:

The programme we follow at Sherburn High School is based on national guidelines provided by the DfE and is sensitive to the age and experience of our pupils. We have thought carefully about which year groups should study which content and consulted with students to ensure information is delivered in a timely manner. It is delivered in period one as part of our Personal Development curriculum, through assemblies and informally through other subject areas and the ethos of the school.

Please be aware that the term 'relationship' is used to describe any connection - friendships, parent-child or romantic relationships.

Healthy and unhealthy relationships.	Year 7
Types of long term partnership.	
Consent and physical contact.	
Puberty and Menstruation.	
Internet safety (inc. peer-on-peer online sexual harassment & abuse)	
Friendship	
LGBTQ+ Equality and Gender Awareness	
Gender based bullying	
Changing bodies	Year 8
Healthy and unhealthy relationships	
Staying safe in online relationships	
Harassment and reporting	
Social Media/E-Safety (inc. peer-on-peer online sexual harassment & abuse)	
Sharing images online	
Recognising consent	
Barrier contraception	
Fertility and reproductive health	Year 9
Extreme unhealthy relationships	
Choosing when to have sex	
Consent (inc. peer-on-peer online sexual harassment & abuse)	
Gaslighting and coercive control	
Coping with a break up	
Types of contraception	
Unplanned pregnancy	
Impact of pornography	Year 10
Dealing with conflict	
Forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FSM)	
Rape, sexual assault and harassment	
Abortion and the law	
Risk taking sexual behaviours - STIs	
Review of contraception	
Ending a toxic relationship	
Reporting assault or harassment	
Family life and pregnancy	
STIs: HIV and AIDS	
Menopause	

RSE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The school's approach to RSE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be

based on personal bias. We shall endeavour to have an approach that is educational, rather than one based on propaganda.

Methodology and Resources:

Teaching will be based on an understanding that a variety of interactive and participatory teaching methods will be used to ensure all pupils are fully involved.

Inclusion:

Information regarding inclusion and the access of RSE for boys and girls can be found in Appendix Two.

Outside Agencies:

Outside agencies are used to compliment the RSE programme following the guidelines for working with visitors in schools.

Partnership with Parents/Carers and the right to withdraw

Most of a pupil's informal sex and relationships education occurs within the family and the school's programme will complement and build on this. We will share responsibility for the education of pupils with parents, who will be kept informed via sharing of the RSE policy as well as letters and leaflets home/website links on the school website.

Some parents prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education.

Parents have a legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with the head teacher at the earliest opportunity and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding:

The school takes its role in the promotion of student welfare seriously. Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for students in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through the tutorial/pastoral system. They offer a listening ear and, where appropriate, information and advice.

Where appropriate, students are referred to the safeguarding team or outside agencies. The school will keep up to date about the development of local services and national help lines for young people, promote their existence to students and form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to student needs.

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made.

It is very rare for a student to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the student may be experiencing.
- The student's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a student would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the student to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the student. Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

Young People under the age of 13

A child under 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sexual activity. Any offence under The Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving a child under 13 is very serious and should be taken to indicate a risk of significant harm to the child. Cases involving under 13's should always be discussed with the nominated child protection lead, Miriam Oakley (Headteacher).

Under the Sexual Offences Act, penetrative sex with a child under the age of 13 is classed as rape. Therefore, in all cases where the sexually active young person is under 13, a referral should be made to Social Care Direct identifying the young person, and the sexual partner if known. Where the allegation concerns penetrative sex, or other intimate sexual activity occurs, there would always be reasonable cause to suspect that a child, whether girl or boy, is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. All cases involving under 13's should be fully documented.

Young People between the ages of 13-16

Sexual Activity with a young person in this age group is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The Act reinforces that whilst mutually agreed, non-exploitative sexual activity between teenagers does take place and that often no harm comes from it, the legal age of consent remains 16. This acknowledges that this group of young people is still vulnerable, even when they do not view themselves as such.

Consideration should be given in every case of sexual activity involving children aged 13-15 as to whether a discussion with other agencies and whether a referral should be made to Safeguarding and Specialist Services. Cases of concern should be discussed with the nominated child protection lead and subsequently with other agencies as required. When confidentiality needs to be preserved a discussion can still take place as long as it does not identify the child (directly or indirectly). Where there is a reasonable cause to suspect that significant harm to a child has occurred/might occur, there should be a presumption that the case is reported to Safeguarding and Specialist Service. All cases should be carefully documented including when a decision is taken not to share information.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct but have a duty to share information with relevant others, if they believe that a child is suffering abuse.

Frazer Guidelines - It is good practice for doctors and other health professionals to follow the criteria outlined by Lord Fraser in 1985, "The House of Lords" ruling commonly known as the Fraser Guidelines.

- The young person understands the health professional's advice.
- The health professional cannot persuade the young person to inform his or her parents or allow the doctor to inform the parents that he or she is seeking contraceptive treatment;

- The young person is very likely to begin or continue having intercourse with or without contraceptive treatment;
- Unless he or she receives contraceptive advice or treatment, the young person's physical or mental health or both are likely to suffer;
- The young person's best interests require the health professionals to give contraceptive advice, treatment or both without parental consent.

Monitoring and Evaluation of RSE:

It is the responsibility of Miss Miller and the Senior Leadership Team to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of RSE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The Governors RA meeting is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationship and Sex Education Policy. Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. This includes evaluating and commenting on the school's RSE policy, and on support and staff development, training and delivery.

Appendix One – Additional information:

The three main elements:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and a range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Attitudes and values:

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.

Personal and social skills:

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Appendix Two – Inclusion:

'Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large majority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Schools should also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

DfE RSE Guidance, 2019

Schools have a clear duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice –including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect, enabling schools to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit, of the Equality Act 2010.

Too often, groups of young people say they feel excluded in RSE lessons. For example, lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils (who make up approximately 10% of any school population) often report that their RSE is solely about heterosexual relationships, or that non heterosexual identities were addressed negatively and that it fails to address sexual health issues linked to the range of sexual behaviours and activities that people encounter whatever their sexual orientation.

Young people with physical or learning disabilities often report that RSE does not meet their needs, while boys tell us they feel excluded because SRE seems to be aimed more at girls – and they are often anxious about being shown up as being ignorant about sexual matters. All children and young people – whatever their experience, background and identity – are entitled to quality relationships and sex education that helps them build confidence and a positive sense of self, and to stay healthy. All classes include pupils with different abilities and disabilities, experiences and backgrounds, gender and sexual identities. To encourage pupils to participate in lessons, teachers should ensure content, approach, and use of inclusive language

reflects the diversity of the school community, and helps each and every pupil to feel valued and included in the classroom.

Teachers should never assume that all intimate relationships are between opposite sexes. All sexual health information should be inclusive and should include LGBT people in case studies, scenarios and role-plays. Boys and girls can explore topics from a different gender's point of view, and a variety of activities – including practical tasks, discussions, group activities and competitions – can provide something for everyone.

- Stonewall has produced a series of packs and information for schools. Details are available at: www.stonewall.org.uk

RSE for the 21st Century (supplementary advice from PSHE Association 2014):

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the school's approach to RSE will take account of:

- The needs of boys as well as girls: Girls tend to have greater access to RSE than boys, both through the media (particularly teenage magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying. Testicular cancer, as well as breast cancer is now included in the RSE events.
- Ethnic and cultural diversity: Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.
- Varying home backgrounds: We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- Sexuality: On average, about 5% of our students will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual. Students may also have GLB parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with GLB people. Our pastoral support will take account of the needs of GLB students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic bullying. We aim to deal sensitively with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that RSE is relevant to them.
- Special educational needs: We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RSE needs.
- Relationship Violence: Schools must be a safe place for all pupils, and efforts to address violence require a whole school approach. RSE provides an ideal space to address sexual and relationship violence.
- Equality: Pupils should be encouraged to consider the importance of equality and respect within relationships, and to develop positive, non-violent behaviour. RSE sets the foundations for developing empathy and understanding between girls and boys, young men and young women. It gives pupils the chance to

challenge gender stereotypes and expectations, and to introduce positive, diverse perspectives on gender roles, hopes and aspirations.

Appendix Three – A Whole School Approach:

A whole school approach will be adapted to RSE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding RSE. In particular:

- The senior leadership team (SLT) will support the provision and development of RSE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.
- The designated Personal Development lead, Miss Miller, will maintain an overview of RSE provision and will evaluate this on an annual basis.
- All teachers are involved in the school's RSE provision in one way or another. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding relationship or sex issues. Teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to RSE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and if requested, access to appropriate training.
- Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some RSE lessons/events and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students. They will have access to information about the RSE programme and will be supported in their pastoral role.
- Governors have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the RSE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governor's meetings.
- Parents/carers have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's RSE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated RSE lessons if they wish. The school will seek and take account of parent/carer views and adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers.
- The school nurse can play a key role in supporting the school in RSE both in terms of advice, input into lessons, provision of pastoral support for students and resources. The school will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the school nurse.

- Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in giving input to RSE lessons/events and as points of referral as support services for students. The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. The school will also promote relevant helping agencies that students can access.
- Students have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate RSE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their RSE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.