



Relationship, Sex and Health Education Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Rokeby School believes that Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) makes an essential contribution to every student's health, wellbeing and preparation for adult life in society. It is an integral part of the PSHE/SMSC provision.

The students in our school come from diverse backgrounds, expressing a spectrum of beliefs and values. Together with our governing body, we have developed a familiarity with the beliefs and attitudes which our range of families have about issues such as abortion, contraception, sexuality and sex.

The stages of development and the experiences of any group of young people of the same age will be diverse and varied, including those experiences of children who may be looked after. This fact has clear implications for curriculum content, teaching approaches, and the creation of an appropriate learning environment based on the need to develop in young people respect for each other's differences.

The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward.

2. AIM OF RSHE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to communicate to staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors and students the manner in which RSHE will be delivered and supported at Rokeby School, in accordance with the *RSHE Statutory Guidance 2020*.

3. FOCI UNDER NEW STATUTORY GUIDANCE

- Different types of relationships- friendships, families, dealing with strangers, intimate relationships e.g. civil partnerships, heterosexual families, homosexual families, single parent families, freedom of marriage.
- How to understand and build healthy relationships including respect, self-respect, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, how to recognise unhealthy relationships and how relationships might affect health and wellbeing including mental health.
- Respectful relationships including healthy friendships on and offline, cyberbullying, damaging effects of stereotypes.
- What constitutes sexual violence and sexual harassment, including female genital mutilation.
- Online and media risks; e-safety, sharing harmful material, sharing and viewing of indecent images.
- Being safe- consent, grooming, abuse, coercion, harassment, domestic abuse, criminal behaviour.
- Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health- positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, reproductive health, peer pressure, STIs.

4. FOUNDATIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE RSHE CURRICULUM

ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Students are helped to examine their own and other people's attitudes and values, particularly related to sexual matters, and to respect the rights of others to their own opinions. RSHE can help students to develop a good self-image and high self-esteem, responsibility and the ability to make informed decisions.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS

RSHE encourages the acquisition of skills so that students' relationships with others may be positive, fulfilling and respectful. It helps them explore how to be themselves in terms of beliefs, culture and traditions and to respect others. It provides opportunities to develop communication skills and assertiveness within a range of different situations, emboldening the students to recognise opportunities to develop a healthy lifestyle.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

RSHE provides information on puberty, personal safety, friendship and love, family life and relationships, gender issues, conception and birth processes, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, prejudice and stereotyping and sex and the law. This gives students an understanding of the nature and diversity of relationships and sexuality. It can provide an objective and balanced view of sexual matters, correcting any misinformation students may have gained. It can give them the information and understanding they need, in accordance with the student's background and beliefs.

HOW IS RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION ORGANISED?

RSHE is not an isolated subject: it permeates the whole school curriculum, the ethos of the school, the pastoral system and is informed by the role models given by teachers. Opportunities should be used as they occur for answering students' questions and exploring issues as they arise.

All subjects, but particularly Science, Religious Education, English and Drama provide a focus for exploring some elements of RSHE. There are also specific P4C sessions, registration time activities and whole school events such as Diversity Month linked to RSHE.

The Assistant Head Teacher (AHT) alongside the pastoral team and head of humanities jointly co-ordinate sex education and are jointly responsible for the overall planning, implementation and review of the programme.

HOW DOES RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION RELATE TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES?

The school's policy for equal opportunities also underpins the teaching of RSHE. Relationship and Sex Education can act as a basis for promoting equality between individuals and groups. It necessarily involves an exploration of human and social diversity, and a fostering of self-esteem and self-worth in a learning environment that recognises and respects difference. We work to ensure that our Relationship, Sex and Health Education is relevant and accessible to all our students and that it is appropriate for all levels of understanding and maturity. Catering for all students and is respectful of how students choose to identify themselves, their sexual orientation and gender identity (emerging). This means that RSHE is sensitive to the different needs of individual students and may evolve and adapt over time.

HOW IS RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION TAUGHT?

The school recognises the need to begin with students' own experiences, beliefs and values and, therefore, places a high importance on creating a supportive and secure atmosphere where they can develop the confidence needed to talk, listen and think about sex and relationships. In order to do this, teachers:

- Establish ground rules with students
- Emphasise the importance of mutual respect
- Encourage reflection

The school also draws on a range of teaching methods in order to encourage exploration of attitudes, values and beliefs, using active learning methods which involve students and help them to personalise information. This also increases the likelihood of the learning being relevant and effective. The school includes activities where students can practise and develop confidence in using communication, negotiation and decision making skills. Students are consulted about issues they wish to explore, how they wish to work together, how well lessons are going and what changes need to be made.

The school recognises that some aspects of RSHE are a whole school concern and that some aspects can be covered by subject teachers across the curriculum. However, there are aspects which need to be taught separately in science and humanities, including those specifically relating to sexual matters such as contraception and STIs. Resources and relevant outside agencies are chosen because they represent diverse beliefs, which are appropriate to students' age, maturity and religious and cultural backgrounds.

CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE PROVISIONS FOR NEW RSHE GUIDELINES

Currently, Rokeby School provides content that is required by the new RSHE guidance. The list below highlights current methods that are used for the provision of RSHE.

- Thought of the Week
- Humanities Week
- P4C
- Extended Registrations
- Assemblies
- Talk 2 Learn
- Workshops delivered by external agencies (Diversity Role Models, Alternatives, Shine, Stonewall, Headstart, Teen and Toddlers and Tender)
- Diversity and Equality Month
- Student Equalities Group
- Humanities Curriculum
- Science Curriculum
- 'Worry Box'

RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

RSHE is part of all students' education and it is hoped that all will participate. However, the school acknowledges that, under the Education Act 1993, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from sex education programme except for that part which occurs in the National Science Curriculum. Parents/Carers need to be aware, however, sex education can occur at any time if it arises naturally from class discussion. They also need to consider whether they want their child withdrawn from all sex education, or just that part which deals explicitly with sexual intercourse and related issues. Parents wishing to exercise that right are asked to make an appointment to meet the AHT to discuss their concerns. The school recognises that they are under no obligation to do so, however. The school will provide alternative arrangements. Students who are withdrawn are given the opportunity to talk to the school nurse.

From September 2020, under the new RSHE Statutory Guidance, if the withdrawal request is made after three terms (an academic year) before the students' 16th birthday, the student will be able to opt in if they want, without parental consent.

PROCEDURE FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING

The policy and teaching programme will be reviewed every three years, based on the outcome of monitoring and evaluation. Community governors and senior staff will take a key role in monitoring the progress of the policy through the community committee agendas.

Student knowledge and understanding of information and issues addressed in RSHE will be evaluated through:

- Students' voice
- Learning walks
- Evidence of students' increased self-responsibility
- Evidence of respectful attitudes to opposite sex monitored by senior pastoral staff
- Decrease in recorded instances of expressions of homophobia, bullying, sexist graffiti, casual use of derogatory language, particularly with sexual or gender meanings, monitored by senior pastoral staff.