Pocklington School

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at Pocklington School are to:

- Enable pupils to learn about what makes healthy relationships, including with family, friends and on-line, how to recognise unhealthy behaviour in relationships and how to seek help if they feel unsafe. It will also teach about the nature and importance of consent.
- Support pupils to develop self-respect, confidence and empathy for others.
- Provide a framework and appropriate place in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education. It was produced by The Head of PSHE through consultation with PSHE staff and PSMG and is based on the following key principles:

- We believe relationships and sex education is important for our pupils and our school because it forms the basis of key interactions in later life.
- We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context for safe and accurate information being provided to students and parents.
- We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by consultation with school SENCO and annual reviews of the programme of study with staff.
- We ensure RSE fosters gender equality and LGBT+ equality by including LGBT issues wherever relevant in the programme of study, whether in discrete lessons or as part of wider topics.

Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity and lessons taught will be age and developmentally appropriate.

Statutory Requirements

From September 2020, all secondary pupils must be taught relationships and sex education. This applies to every school whether it is maintained, academy, free school or independent. The content of our lessons with regards discrimination of any sort is guided by the equality act (2010).

The RSE policy sits alongside and complements the school's PSHE Policy.

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance
- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- ISI Regulatory Requirements

Curriculum

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHE education provision. A summary of RSE specific content can be found in appendix A.

We will ensure RSE is matched to the needs of our pupils by ongoing consultation with the Head of Wellbeing, staff, and pupils. Our RSE programme is inclusive of LGBT pupils, with references made within lessons where appropriate.

Our RSE programme will be planned and delivered through a set of timetabled lessons, with a spiral model ensuring that topics are revisited annually at an age and developmentally appropriate level. High-quality resources will support our RSE provision and will be reviewed annually. Selected resources, such as articles and film clips, will be used which support and promote understanding. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress by engagement in discussions, written reflections, and summary assessment tasks.

Learning about relationships and sex education in PSHE education lessons will link to/complement learning within the wider PSHE curriculum.

Assessment in RSE will take the approach that grading is not an appropriate way of marking, as the aim is more to review student reflection on the topics.

An overview of the learning in each year group can be found in the PSHE shared folder, located in the PSHE OneDrive folder.

Safe and effective practice

We will ensure a safe learning environment by setting out clear ground rules for discussing all aspects of PSHE. These ground rules are introduced at the start of the year, and then revisited when required, so that all students understand the expectations of PSHE and RSE lessons and feel confident to ask questions in a safe environment. Sensitive issues will be handled by reminding students of the RSE ground rules. They also provide distancing from personal experiences by asking staff and students do not refer to their own experiences in first person.

Pupils will also be able to raise questions via Microsoft Teams or school email, and also through anonymous notes.

Pupils' questions will be answered by the member of staff teaching the lesson, or the trained professional who is visiting the school, should this be appropriate.

If pupils who have been withdrawn from Sex Education lessons have questions related to sex education, this would be raised with parents in order to discuss the appropriate next steps on a case by case basis.

All staff teaching RSE will be supported by the Head of PSHE wherever required.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Disclosures will always be treated in a confidential manner and teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and in his /her absence their deputy should they have any safeguarding concerns about a child.

Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to provide the relevant safety documentation for working with young people, and will be made aware of the school's safeguarding policy.

Engaging stakeholders

Parents will be informed about the policy through an annual email update (that also includes Topics taught). The policy will be available to parents via the school website, and parents are invited to share their views on the Policy as part of the annual communication.

We are committed to working with parents and carers by encouraging an open dialogue with PSHE staff, via our annual PSHE communication. This ensures that parents are fully aware of what is being taught, and specifically when Relationships and Sex education will be taught. This also provides the opportunity for parents to raise any questions or concerns. Parents are also welcome to discuss any aspect of PSHE at any time, by contacting the Head of PSHE. We also hold an annual in-person or online presentation for parents to outline the policies, schemes of work, and some representative samples of lesson material, in detail. Parents who wish to view our teaching material can also arrange to meet with the Head of PSHE to do so.

Governors will be informed of the RSE policy and curriculum through invitation and attendance by the Head of PSHE to Governors' meetings, when required.

Teaching staff will be invited annually to comment on this policy and its attached topics.

Pupil voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of pupils.

Parents' right to withdraw

RSE is part of all students' education and it is hoped that all will participate. However, under the DfE Sex and Relationship Guidance for 2026, parents do have the right to withdraw their children from some or all components of sex education within statutory RSE (that means the lessons that cover physical aspects of sexual development and intimate relationships. Details of which topics this covers can be found in Appendix A). Full details of which of sections parents wish to withdraw from would discussed upon request up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Head of School. A meeting will then be arranged with the Head of School and the Head of PSHE, where the withdrawal request will be discussed with parents. Appropriate action will then be taken and, if necessary, alternative provision arranged for pupils who are withdrawn from sex education. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record.

Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored through meetings with staff and lesson observations. Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities, and therefore is also considered in monitoring the delivery of RSE.

Pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons, through ungraded, in-class discussions and planned assessments at the end of each unit of work. These will take place once every half term, on average.

Roles and responsibilities

The RSE programme will be led by the Head of PSHE. It will be taught by PSHE teachers within the context of PSHE lessons.

PSHE Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way, taking account of pupils' cultural and faith backgrounds
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE, as with any other subject
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the sex education components of RSE.

PSHE Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching aspects of RSE should discuss the concern with the Head of PSHE.

The Head of PSHE

Is responsible for:

- Developing and updating teaching resources

- Providing support/training for PSHE teachers
- Monitoring PSHE lessons and staff
- Responding to wider PSHE related issues across other areas of School life.

The Deputy Head (Academic)

Is responsible for:

- Policy and curriculum-based oversight of PSHE and RSE.

The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing any requests to withdraw pupils from sex education components of RSE (see section 8). The Head of School is also responsible for ensuring that any young person who was previously withdrawn from sex education but wishes to receive it during the 3 terms before they turn 16 is provided with sex education.

The Governing Body

The governing body will approve the RSE policy and hold the Head of School to account for its implementation.

Oversight of the RSE policy is undertaken by the Governors Committee and will be undertaken by the Head of PSHE in September of each academic year to ensure it meets current requirements and guidance.

Appendix A – RSE Topics

Topics marked with * are specifically Sex Education topics, and therefore are subject to the right to withdraw.

First year	Building relationships, family, romance and friendships (including online), consent and relationship boundaries, early sexual relationships*
Second year	Identity and relationships - sexual orientation, consent, positive relationships, harmful sexual behaviour, and an introduction to sex – sexual activity*, sexual readiness*, contraception and STIs
Third year	Intimate relationships* and sex education including sexual consent*, contraception, the risks of STIs, and attitudes to pornography
Fourth year	Healthy sexual relationships* and sex expectations*, myths pleasure and challenges*, including the impact of the media and pornography
Fifth year	Communication in relationships, relationship challenges and abuse, healthy sexual relationships,* consent in practice* Different families and parental responsibilities, pregnancy, marriage and forced marriage and changing relationships