

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Aspire Learning



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1. Overview

This policy was developed in response to Relationship and Sex Education Guidance DfES 2000, Updated SRE Guidance 2010, DFE Advice SMSC 2014, the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and National Healthy Schools Programme.

This policy is in line with the statutory guidance provided by the DFE ‘Relationships and sex Education (RSE) and health education’ 2020. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis and Aspire welcomes input from parents/carers.

Aspire recognises that the recent change from the DFE has meant that we have reviewed our entire RSE curriculum and created new content, which is supportive of the aims set out by the DFE. Key issues that were newly defined, following the implementation of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 are:

- Relationships education compulsory at primary school.
- Relationships and sex education compulsory at secondary school.
- Physical health and mental well-being.

2. Rationale

Relationship and Sex education provides an excellent forum to provide pupils with life skills that will enable them to make informed decisions and protect themselves against harmful and exploitative situations. Relationship and Sex Education is therefore a tool to safeguard children.

Relationship and Sex Education contributes to the foundation of PSHE and offers a valuable vehicle for promoting equality between individuals and groups. It involves an exploration of human and social diversity, and a fostering of self-worth whilst recognising, accepting, and respecting differences.

Aspire recognises that in judging overall effectiveness, Ofsted will also require evidence of pupil’s social, moral, cultural and spiritual (SMSC) development. The delivery of an age-appropriate and well taught RSE curriculum, within a comprehensive PSHE curriculum, will contribute to this judgement.

Moral and values framework

The Relationship and Sex Education Policy will be sensitive towards the established morals and values framework of all the major world religions and philosophies. In its implementation, it will draw from the practical experiences of those who represent the various religious and philosophical groups within the local community. The Relationship and Sex Education Policy will be complimentary with the Religious Education Policy of our school.

3. What is relationship and sex education?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. Relationship and sex education forms part of the secondary curriculum and is required to be delivered to all year groups.

It involves teaching children about physical and mental well-being, healthy relationships, LGBTQ, reproduction, sexuality, and sexual health but not limited to these areas. It does not promote early sexual activity or any sexual orientation. In lines with Government guidance, we have updated our curriculum and have further embedded RSE as a core part of our PSHE curriculum.

RSE is a compulsory component of the curriculum, however some topics are not compulsory, and parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from these. The curriculum covers a broad range of topics that promote healthy living and pupils' rights and in doing so, the school encourages parents/carers to allow their child to access the full PSHE curriculum. Pupils aged 16 + can decide if they wish to remove themselves from RSE.

4. Aims and objectives

The aim of this policy is to enable the effective planning, delivery and assessment of RSE. Objectives are for Aspire students to:

- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their judgements, decisions and behaviour.
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.
- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge the kind of relationships they want.
- Communicate effectively.
- Understand differences in human sexuality and gender (heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and trans-gender).
- Be aware of their own sexuality and gender (heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and trans-gender).
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and the reasons for having protected sex.
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves offline and online and be aware of the implication of sexting and online grooming.
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.
- Understand how to avoid being exploited or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- Understand how to avoid exploiting others or pressuring them into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- Access confidential sexual health advice, support and if necessary, treatment.
- Know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

- Understand what consent means and factors that influence one's ability to consent.

Teaching staff in all schools to be confident:

- In planning, delivering and assessing RSE.
- In answering questions from parents/carers and dealing with sensitive issues.

5. Delivery of RSE

Content of RSE in the curriculum

Aspire specifically delivers Relationship and Sex Education through its PSHE programme, Jigsaw, supported by additional sessions run in tutor times and through intervention programs.

The focus for Aspire's RSE curriculum is to support learners to develop healthy relationships, respect others rights, stay safe and know where to seek health advice. Although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included.

The Science curriculum is delivered by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some pupils will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. Ground rules also aim to ensure that any peers in the lesson respond to these sensitive issues respectfully, this is modeled by all staff present.

When pupils ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the developmental stage of all pupils, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

Who delivers RSE and how:

Teaching/ delivery staff generally deliver the RSE Curriculum but at times are supported by external professionals where appropriate.

Tutors work closely with their pupils over a number of years delivering RSE topics within tutor times. Due to being aware of each child's individual circumstances, this allows for more targeted learning and helps re-enforce learning delivered within the RSE curriculum.

More expert or specialist teachers support teachers around certain aspects of the curriculum. Support is offered by the Deputy Head Teacher and Assistant Head teacher (Curriculum Lead) who supports with planning/delivery of lessons and external professionals support where required.

6. Assessment and evaluation of learning and teaching

Resources are provided by the subject coordinator at each site/ provision, in collaboration with other key staff and are regularly reviewed for age and content suitability.

Formal assessment is carried out on a half termly basis as part of the PSHE assessment cycle, with additional summative/formative assessment in lessons and reports from intervention work.

Assessment in RSE/PSHE education is especially important to evidence the progress of pupils with SEND and in order to identify future needs. This assessment may also identify risks to and vulnerabilities of the pupil, where there is a lack of understanding of RSE/PSHE issues, to which a safeguarding response would be appropriate. For some pupils this may entail very small steps which are consolidated and reinforced by re-visiting their original learning.

Other pupils may be able to progress managing increasing levels of challenge. The most meaningful model of assessment in RSE/PSHE education, especially for pupils with SEND, is ipsative assessment in which a pupil's own starting point is the benchmark against which progress is measured, rather than the performance of others or the requirements of an exam syllabus. This gives us the following model for assessing learning in PSHE education:

1. BASELINE ASSESSMENT

Carry out a baseline assessment before starting a new 'piece of learning' (which might be a single lesson or series of lessons constituting a 'module' or 'topic').

2. ASSESSMENT for LEARNING (AfL)

Build AfL into the lesson(s) to gauge understanding, adopt teaching, promote, and maximise learning. Strategies might include building on the baseline assessment, structured questioning, mini plenaries between activities and feedback to students.

3. ASSESSMENT of LEARNING (AoL)

At the end of the 'piece of learning', measure progress from the starting point (AoL). Use this to evidence progress and inform future teaching.

Assessment also involves:

- Peer assessment
- Self assessment
- Teachers delivering RSE constantly evaluate their lessons to inform future planning.

Assessment of RSE delivered outside the curriculum is conducted through the monitoring and observation of pupils' learning with reference to the following:

- Knowledge and understanding gained.
- Skills learnt and developed.
- Attitudes and values explored.
- Responses offered by pupils.

7. Specific issues within RSE

Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns. We will ensure that all young people receive relationship and sex education regardless of their needs, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that relationship and sex education is relevant to them.

Challenging negative attitudes

Our whole school approach is to challenge all incidents of bullying, including incidents of sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.

Right of Withdrawal of Students from Relationship and sex Education and Child Withdrawal Procedure

Some parents/carers prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. They have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Relationship and sex education except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons) Aspire provided all parents/carers with the opportunity to express their wish to withdraw their child, during parent consultation period in July 2021. For all student joining the school thereafter, parents/ carers will be informed of the RSE policy and their right to withdraw their child at the student's initial induction.

If a parent/ carer feels it necessary to withdraw their child at any point during their child's placement, they should arrange to come to school and discuss their concerns with the Curriculum Lead or Deputy Head. A child has a right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16) even if it is against his/her parents' wishes.

In the event of a child being withdrawn from a lesson, that child must stay in school and will be assigned to another alternative tasks for the duration of each RSE lesson.

In the unlikely event that the concern cannot be dealt with, Directors and/or the Local Authority will be contacted as appropriate.

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents/carers or the Senior teacher of any disclosure unless the Senior teacher or Head of department has specifically requested them to do so **but any concern must be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- The young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice.
- Child protection issues will be considered and referred if necessary to their site's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The young person will be properly counselled about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.
- In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.
- Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

8. Partnerships with Parents and Carers

The school views parents and carers as partners in the delivery of RSE.

Parents/carers will be informed about the relationship and sex education programme at the start of the academic year, as part of information provided on what their children will be learning.

The school will liaise with parents/carers through:

- Email/ SMS
- Letter

The school encourages parents/carers to voice their concerns about RSE with their child's tutor and Senior teacher. Parents wishing for further support with talking to their child about RSE issues can contact the school.

Parents will be signposted to:

Sex Education Forum's 'Talk to your child about sex & relationships: support for parents' factsheet 31(2003): <http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/183635/talk-to-your-children.pdf>

The PSHE Association's resources for parents:

http://www.pshe-association.org.uk/resources_search_details.aspx?ResourceId=461