

# Whitecross Hereford: High School & Specialist Sports College

Policy: Relationships and Sex Education

Reviewed by: *Quality of Education*

Reviewed: October 2019

Approved by Full Board: 04 November 2019

From September 2020 the Government will rename Sex and Relationships Education- Relationships and Sex Education. RSE is used in this policy as an abbreviation of the new name from September 2020. This policy reflects the implemented changes as a result of the DfE guidelines published in February 2019.

## Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide a stimulating and supportive learning environment in which students can develop their feelings of self-worth and confidence especially in relationship to others. RSE is **not** about encouraging teenagers to become sexually active nor is it about promoting any particular lifestyle of relationship choice. RSE is about providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make safe, healthy and informed relationship choices as young people and in the future as adults. This will include developing the following skills: valuing themselves as unique individuals, keeping themselves and others healthy and safe, communication, decision making and assertiveness, knowing how and where to gain information and support and participating in society.

## There are three main elements:

- gaining knowledge and understanding;
- developing positive attitudes and values;
- extending personal and social skills.

## The objectives are:

- to help support students through their physical, emotional and moral development;
- to help students learn to respect themselves and others;
- to help students move from childhood, through adolescence and into adulthood with confidence;
- to enable students to value the importance of family life, marriage and stable, loving relationships as key to being a good citizen;
- to teach students about relationships, sex, sexuality and sexual health;
- to be fully inclusive of all genders, sexual orientation and all types of families;
- to develop a clear understanding on the importance of consent;
- to place paramount importance on online safety and the risks of social media and the internet for relationships and sexual purposes;
- to help students develop positive attitudes, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding.

Our RSE curriculum content covers the required topics and themes as set out in *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education*. More detailed content of the RSE curriculum will be made available to parents on request.

### **Sensitive or Controversial Topics**

- During Relationships & Sex Education lessons (and at other times) controversial topics may arise. The judgement of individual teachers will decide as to whether the subjects are suitable for class discussion. Teachers will try to answer pupils' questions honestly, sensitively and in such a way that takes the context into account. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of the teacher must come in to play
- If a question is felt to be too explicit, the teacher will acknowledge it and deal with it outside the whole class setting
- Teachers should establish a set of ground rules so that young people are aware of parameters.
- Pupils should never be asked to disclose their sexual orientation or personal information about themselves or others
- Teachers and pupils will show respect for all genders, sexualities and different types of families
- Any concerns that arise about sexual abuse or any other safeguarding issues must be followed up under the school's safeguarding procedures
- Where discussions about sexual behaviour arise from apparently unrelated topics, teachers will give attention to relevant issues, again using professional judgement.
- HIV/AIDS - Informative discussions covering the transmission of the HIV virus may, by the very nature of the subject, include discussion of certain sexual acts and practices. Teachers will deal sensitively and objectively with information of this kind, and will always avoid the development of bias and prejudice. Teachers will challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about HIV.

### **Partnership with parents/guardians**

Parental support is integral to the success of our RSE curriculum. While we have an educational and legal obligation to provide young people with Relationships & Sex Education we respect the primary role of the parents in educating their children about these matters.

Under the government guidelines (2019), parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. If a parent/guardian wishes to withdraw their child they need to have a discussion with the Headteacher to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory Science lessons.

If a student has been withdrawn from sex education, then this withdrawal lasts up to and until three terms before the student turns 16. After that point, if the student wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, then arrangements will be made to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Details of when sex education is taught as part of the RSE curriculum is communicated home to parents giving all the right to withdraw.

More details of the PSHE and RSE curriculum are available upon request.

### **Moral and values framework**

At Whitecross we focus on teaching RSE in the context of relationships using a variety of formal and informal opportunities and strategies. This all helps children to develop their self-esteem and emotional well being and to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, which are based on respect for themselves and for others.

The teaching of RSE takes place in the context of our agreed school values as described in our Climate for Learning Policy.

### **Inclusion statement**

In our school we have a commitment to ensure that our programme is relevant to all students and is taught in a way that is age and stage appropriate.

### **Links with other policies**

For specific details about possible related issues e.g. Inclusion, Confidentiality, Child Protection, Bullying, reference needs to be made to our relevant school policy.

### **Staff training**

All staff members at Whitecross have a responsibility to deliver the PSHE and RSE curriculum. All teachers and other staff members who are required to teach RSE will have relevant training and resources.

### **Organisation of RSE**

RSE is mainly taught in PSHE lessons. Aspects are also taught through Science, ICT, English and Beliefs & Values lessons. Through planned lessons in the curriculum as well as through wider school activities such as assemblies and Cross-Curricular Days children are able to develop their ideas, knowledge and skills gradually and appropriately.

Teachers have the main responsibility for teaching about RSE in the classroom and they plan and liaise with other specialists to ensure our students receive an up to date and balanced programme.

### **Teaching strategies**

As much as possible we provide an interactive learning environment which is motivating and allows students to practise skills as well as to gain information and knowledge. We also allow time for reflection.

### **Confidentiality and child protection**

All staff members and external visitors, who work with our students will have access to this policy and our School's Child Protection Policy. The Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will have a discussion with any health professional or other adult before they start to work with our children. This is to ensure they are familiar with our policy and expectations regarding correct practice and how to respond to issues, including those that may relate to child protection matters.

We make clear to students what our procedures are with regard to confidentiality. Similarly if questions are asked in class, adults will follow agreed practice based on DfE Guidance 2000.

We also ensure that all external visitors to the school are DBS checked or are accompanied by a DBS checked member of staff in accordance with our Safeguarding policy.

### **Monitoring of RSE**

Our Head of Science and PSHE Co-ordinator will monitor teaching and learning according to our school's policy. Implementation will be monitored by the Headteacher and PSHE Co-ordinator and reported on to the Governing body.

### **Evaluation, assessment and reporting to parents/guardians**

Evaluation and assessment including self-assessment are an integral part of RSE. Assessments are used to capture progress and to identify where students need extra support or intervention.