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Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all students as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At this school we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents and approved by the Trust Education Committee. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – The Trust Head of Legal reviewed all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance to produce a draft template. This was reviewed by the Trust Education Executive Team and then approved by the Trust Education Committee.
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were sent information about the policy and were invited to ask questions and make comments
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made in light of the consultations, the policy was shared with senior Trust staff and the Local Governing Body and ratified

Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, 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.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Oxford Spires Academy's statutory RSE and Health programme has been carefully considered and focusses on the needs of our students. This takes into account their age and our community. A key part of RSE is to safeguard our students. To provide them with clear knowledge so they are aware of issues in the world around them. This will be delivered in a sensitive way ensuring that religious and cultural views about sexual behaviour are respected whilst still ensuring that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

It is important to us that RSE is delivered in a clear, impartial and scientific way, providing information on matters such as the changes of puberty, abortion and assisted conception, as well as covering the law in relation to, for example, forced-marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). Some of the RSE curriculum will be delivered by specialists within the school.

We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We work closely with the SEND team, differentiate within lessons appropriately and revisit the curriculum in subsequent years allowing a cyclical learning structure. The principle being that as students develop at different rates they may relate to topics at different times. The curriculum is built to recap, review, and then develop.

We ensure RSE fosters gender equality and LGBT+ by the way in which lessons are delivered. Teachers will safeguard that the language and examples they use cover all aspects of human relationships.

We believe that RSE is important in the growth and development of our students. It allows them to be empowered with knowledge to make well informed decisions about their lives. Our main focus is on the importance of good, positive relationships and how we can maintain those. It aims to support our students in identifying those relationships and provide skills of maintaining good relationships that are going to enable them to become who they wish to become in the future.

RSE will provide students with knowledge about a variety of issues that they may come across now or later on into their adult lives. It will provide time and opportunity to weigh up information and problem solve. These are key skills that will be able to use in their adult lives as they come across new situations.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

Delivery of RSE

The RSE curriculum has been carefully mapped across the curriculum within the school. Some aspects are delivered through our Assembly and Tutor programme and some aspects are delivered through the Science curriculum and drop down events across the year.

Sex Education is taught within the Science Curriculum.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- The law

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Education Committee

The Trust Education Committee will approve the RSE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSE (see **Parents' right to withdraw**).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the head teacher.

Some aspects of RSE are delivered by [RSE staff tutors, Science teachers]. We also have a team of specialist teachers of RSE who are shown below:

Claire Cole- Head of RSE/ HOY 11

Mark Brown- Teacher of RSE/ HOY 9

Sean Masterson – Teacher of RSE/Vice Principal /HOY 10

Laura Smith- Teacher of RSE/HOY 7

Megan Minton Teacher of RSE/HOH

Shelley Baker Teacher of RSE/DSL

Craig Green Teacher of RSE/ Co-Head of PE

Claire May Teacher of RSE/Head of Wellbeing

Georgina Trafford- Teacher of RSE/ HOH Bannister

Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until three 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 using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the head teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The head teacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE in our school is monitored by Claire Cole & Sean Masterson through:

- Learning walks of RSE lessons will be undertaken by the RSE lead, SLT link and HOH/HOY.
- Students will complete end of unit assessments and these will be recorded and reviewed to inform teaching practice.
- The RSE lead, SLT link, HOH/HOY will use LWs to conduct book reviews of students with specific cohort focuses.
- Student voice collated from drop down sessions and student voice captured within the year will inform practice.

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Education Committee.