



Sherwood Park School

Inspiring Autonomy and Excellence

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION, RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

Policy Name	Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy
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1.3	March 2025	Whole policy updated, including Title Change, removal of curriculum overview appendix & inclusion of Health Education curriculum areas.

SHERWOOD PARK SCHOOL

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION AND RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION (RSE) AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

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1. Rationale

Sherwood Park School is a Foundation Special School for students aged 3-19 with severe/profound and complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as students with complex Autism.

The School operates across two sites within the London Borough of Sutton. Sherwood Park campus supports learners age 3-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and pupils with Autism. Sherwood Hill campus supports students with Autism and/or complex behaviour from KS2-Post 19. All students have an Educational, Health and Care plan.

It is the policy of Sherwood Park School to provide Relationships Education and Health Education to our primary pupils and Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education to our secondary pupils at a level appropriate to their understanding and with the consent and co-operation of their parents/carers. We aim to cover areas, which are relevant to our pupils, through a carefully planned programme, structured to develop pupil knowledge, attitudes and skills in relation to sexuality and relationships in their widest sense.

2. Aims

- Provide a framework 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
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To become more self-aware of their bodies
- To develop an awareness of appropriate relationships
- To establish clear boundaries within which our students may develop confidence and appropriate behaviour
- To encourage students to discuss their feelings and worries
- To develop skills in language, decision making and assertiveness
- To help students develop an awareness of others
- To ensure all students are given the rights of dignity, privacy and respect as individuals
- To encourage students to form their own opinions and make judgements
- To help students gain access to information and services (older students)
- To enable the students to participate in the community successfully

3. Statutory Guidance

3.1 Statutory Guidance for EYFS, KS1 and KS2

As a maintained all-age school we must provide relationships education to all pupils of Primary age under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

We are not required to provide sex education, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum, which are:

Pupils should be taught to:

- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

Where appropriate, we may teach sex education to primary age students on an individual basis, for example if a pupil experiences early puberty, which would include:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

This would be discussed with the pupil's parent or carer before any teaching would take place.

In teaching Relationships Education, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

At Sherwood Park School we teach Relationships Education as set out in this policy.

3.2 Statutory Guidance for Key Stage 3, 4 and Post 16

As an all-age school we must provide RSE to all Secondary age pupils under the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

At Sherwood Park School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

4. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
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 invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

5. 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.

A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline (21st Century Guidance 2014).

6. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out in the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Curriculum which can be viewed upon request. We may need to adapt it as and when necessary and following review which takes place annually.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils 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.

Relationships education in KS1 and 2 focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

Health Education in KS1 and 2 focuses on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing, including the following areas:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Relationships and Sex Education in KS3, 4 and Post 16 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

Health Education in KS3, 4 and Post 16 focuses on enabling pupils to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves, to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions. The curriculum includes the following areas :

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

7. Delivery of Relationships Education and RSE

7.1 Delivery of Relationships Education and Health Education for KS1 and KS2

Relationships Education for the younger pupils at KS1 and 2 is taught throughout the year and within a cross-curricular approach alongside areas such as Well-being and Citizenship. Where appropriate, if an individual requires to be taught sex education during primary, that goes beyond what is taught in the science curriculum, this will first be discussed with the parents or carers and delivered in specific sessions either as 1:1 teaching or in small groups.

7.2 Delivery of RSE and Health Education for KS3, 4 and Post 16

RSE is addressed in an age appropriate manner working within our schemes of work and in partnership with parents, carers and outside agencies where appropriate. Parents/carers will be consulted before a specific programme is undertaken and will be able to come to school to discuss the content of the sessions and view the resources, for instance at a Parents Evening. A Scheme of Work is available for all parents if requested.

Students will be taught in small groups based on the child's age, ability and level of understanding, and for some sessions in single sex groups. Teachers will lead the sessions but other partners such as the School Nurse may also contribute. Outside agencies will be used where appropriate e.g. Sexual Health Clinic. Visiting drama groups and role-play may also be used to help students to practise getting out of difficult situations and saying 'No'.

Some of the teaching will take place in the context of other lessons such as changing after swimming, or by individual informal discussions with staff involving questions or problems. It is important that the older students have the chance to talk informally where and when they wish and with whom they wish, and may need a mentor or advocate.

The programme will be taught throughout the year and there may be links to Accredited courses.

7.3 What kind of language will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education lessons?

All staff will:

- Openly teach pupils what 'slang' words mean (where appropriate) and that some are offensive.
- Use inclusive language (such as partner instead of boyfriend/girlfriend).
- Use correct terminology as this is deemed good practice.
- Avoid the use of any slang.

It is good practice to use medically correct terms for genitalia and sexual parts of the body, for example vulva, vagina, penis and testicles. Ofsted provides full support for this approach (2013) and have raised concerns that some schools are currently failing to teach this vocabulary because this leaves children unable to describe abusive behaviours.

The use of respectful language which challenges sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice can be established in Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education and will have benefits for the whole school community.

7.4 Safeguarding

Some issues may result in children and young people making disclosures which will be addressed in line with school safeguarding policy and procedures.

RSE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. RSE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. State-funded schools have responsibilities for safeguarding and a legal duty to promote pupil well-being (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 38). Updated government safeguarding guidance is available (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021) and

includes a section about being alert to signs that young girls may be at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM).

At Sherwood Park School we recognise that our children and young people require support and help in developing their understanding of puberty and the changes it brings, both physical and emotional. It is of utmost importance that our students learn about social rules as inappropriately sexual behaviour in public situations might put them at risk and increase their vulnerability.

At the Sherwood Park School we support our pupils to learn about social skills, privacy and hygiene. This takes place through teaching and learning about the concept of public and private from the early years. We reinforce the fact that school is a public space and require our staff to maintain this message.

7.5 Use of resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

7.6 Statement of Sherwood Park's commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion, with reference to the Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policies:

Sherwood Park considers the needs of different groups within the school. The programme is differentiated at point of delivery by trained staff, so that it is appropriate to pupils' age, ability, gender and maturity. We aim to ensure all pupils are treated fairly, with no discrimination or bullying on grounds of gender, race, religion, colour, language, culture, social circumstances, appearance, sexuality, ability or disability etc.

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and any other groups, however they choose to identify.

Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education have produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE 2014b).

Across all key stages the areas of learning mentioned above 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).

We are also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The governing board

The governing body will approve the Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 9).

8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

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

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

The designated staff responsible for leading Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education at Sherwood Park School are:

Megan Smith – Assistant Head at Sherwood Hill Campus

Luka Koczon – Assistant Head at Sherwood Park campus

All class teachers will have responsibility in delivering RSE lessons.

8.4 Pupils

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

9. Parents' right to withdraw

For pupils in EYFS, KS1 and KS2:

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships Education.

Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory] components of sex education within RSE that go beyond what is in the science curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

For pupils in KS3, KS4 and Post-16:

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory] components of sex education within RSE, that go beyond what is in the science curriculum, 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 using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education prior to delivering any lessons 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 Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is monitored by Megan Smith– Assistant Head at Sherwood Hill Campus and Luka Koczon – Assistant Head at Sherwood Park Campus through:

- Planning scrutinies
- Learning walks
- Formal lesson observations

Pupils' development in Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Megan Smith and Luka Koczon every year or when necessary if sooner. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher and the governing body.

Jessica Hall Oct 2020

Reviewed: Beth Brookes July 2023

Reviewed: Jess Baldwin - March 2025

Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	