The Polesworth School
ENSURING EXCELLENCE

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

Member of leadership team with lead responsibility for oversight and update of policy	DOW
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Table of Contents

Introduction and Scope	3
Aims	3
Relationship and Sex Education	4
Areas of Study	4-5
Methodology	6
Specific Issues and Inclusion	6-7
Roles and Responsibilities	7-8
Withdrawal from RSE Lessons	8-9
Confidential, Controversial and Sensitive Issues	9
Monitoring, Evaluation and Review	9
External Speakers and Health Professionals	10
Further Information	10
Appendix 1 – PSHE Thematic Model – Year 7 Overview	11
Appendix 2 – DFE Leaflet	11

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Introduction and Scope

This policy has been produced in accordance with DfE RSE guidelines (July 2020), which came into effect in March 2021 and in consultation with The Polesworth School staff, parents/carers, governors, students and the wider school community.

Relationship and sex education (RSE) is part of a balanced, cross-curricular, personal, social, health, and economic education (PSHE) which supports the aims and ethos of the school (in line with the school equal opportunities policy). It is intended that this programme should complement parental responsibilities, and it is seen as an integral part of each student's personal development. RSE deals with relationships, emotions, sex, sexuality and sexual health.

This policy is made available to all staff, new staff at induction and all parents/carers on request and is published on the school website.

This policy document identifies effective strategies that we will implement in this area of the curriculum and takes account of the OFSTED inspection framework 2019 following the guidance from the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State issues guidance on delivering these subjects, which all schools must have regard to, including setting out that students are taught:

- Safety in forming and maintaining relationships
- The characteristics of healthy relationships
- How relationships may affect mental and physical health
- Schools must publish and make available a policy on the subjects

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Encourage the development of self-esteem and the valuing of others.
- Encourage students towards independence of choice and judgement within the parameters of the Education Act 1993.
- Encourage students to be responsible for their own sexual behaviour.

- Develop the understanding of different personal relationships i.e. the nature and functions of “family” life and personal relationships in all their varieties.
- Provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, with attention of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health.
- Prepare students for an adult life.
- Encourage students to seek advice and guidance from School staff and agencies.
- Ensure opportunities are available for all students to develop the social skills to enable them to make informed choices.
- Encourage students to be positive about sexual health, their own sexuality and appreciate the similarities and differences encountered in others.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

RSE has 3 main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care; Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognize and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay.
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Areas of Study

The Polesworth School RSE programme will develop knowledge and understanding of:

- Physical, emotional and social changes at puberty.
- The biology of reproduction.
- Risks to health and safety including sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.
- The law relating to sexual behaviour.
- Stereotyping.
- Moral attitudes held by different cultures and groups.
- Advantages and disadvantages of family planning methods.
- The range of sexual attitudes in present day society including celibacy.
- Changing nature of sexuality over time and its impact e.g. menopause.
- The wide impact of having children on people's lives.

The Polesworth School RSE programme will develop the following skills:

- Recognising personal choice in managing relationships and dealing with peer pressure and difficult relationship issues.
- Recognising and dealing with sexual harassment.
- Recognising the difference between friendship/ love/ infatuation.
- Identification, assessment (including prediction) and management of positive and negative risk to self and others.
- Recognising, evaluating and utilising strategies for managing influence The Polesworth School RSE programme will develop the following attitudes and values:
- Attitudes towards partnerships / marriage / divorce / separation / bereavement.
- Attitudes towards controversial issues such as contraception, abortion, HIV/AIDS.
- Myths, misconceptions and stereotypes linked with sex and sexuality.

The provision of RSE will be tailored to the age group of the students and their needs, taking into account the developmental differences of students and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.

It should be noted that RSE is not specific to anyone area of the curriculum. The discrete timetabled lessons of RSE and PSHE components of the curriculum in Years 7 8 and 9 is delivered by tutors an hour every two weeks. Plus, two enrichment mornings per year delivered by specialist staff. The curriculum in Years 10 11 12 and 13 is delivered by Head of PSHE and RSE, considering local context and need (driven by data from Joint Strategic

Needs Assessment (JSNA) and CHIMAT – The National Child and Mental Health Network). The strong professional relationship between tutors and students is central to RSE allowing the learning to extend beyond the academic, vocational or technical curriculum and allowing students to engage with views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own in considered ways within a secure environment.

The planning and delivery of PSHE will be sequenced and spiralled throughout the student's time at The Polesworth School and commits to teaching from the starting point of the law; the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty paying due diligence to the protected characteristics as defined in law, ensuring students know that no form of discrimination is tolerated.

All of the content underpins the wider work of the school helping to foster student wellbeing, develop resilience and character. Central to this is the student's ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal, supporting the whole school ethos of a culture of excellence.

Sample schemes of work used can be found in Appendix 1.

Methodology

The method of delivering RSE across the school is no different to the delivery of other subjects in terms of the activities and range of resources. In the classroom students will be involved in group work and individual task. The emphasis and approach will vary according to the subject. For example, in science there is a more factual approach to sex; in Personal and Social Health and Economic lessons there is a focus on personal relationships, attitudes and values, while in PE, areas such as a healthy mind and body are discussed as ongoing issues.

Where topics covered are particularly sensitive and it is considered by the Safeguarding Lead and Head of PSHE that they would be best taught in single sex groups, they will set a framework for establishing what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.

There are a number of principles for classroom practice for anyone leading an RSE session. It will be a matter of common practice that:

- No-one (teacher or student) will have to answer a personal question.
- No-one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- The correct names for body parts will be used most of the time.
- Sensitivity will be shown towards those of particular faith backgrounds.
- Nothing should be said that could be construed as embarrassing or offensive to other students.
- If a question is too personal, the student will be reminded of the ground rules. The student may then be referred to the appropriate health professional or outside agency via their Head of Year or a Safeguarding officer if they require further support.
- Any materials used for the purpose of explanation will be appropriate, and in no way explicit.
- All topics are taught from the point of the law.

If a question is too explicit, seems too old for the student, is inappropriate for the whole class or raises concerns about sexual abuse, it will not be answered in front of the whole class. The teacher will discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate. In cases of safeguarding concern, the safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed.

Specific Issues and Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be inclusive, sensitive and culturally appropriate 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 try, where possible, to anticipate these requests and concerns prior to their occurrence and accommodate them appropriately as well as responding to any that arise.

Students with Special Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honesty with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate question and offer support. We will liaise closely with parents/carers to ensure that they feel reassured of the content and the context in which it will be presented.

Menstruation

Students are taught about puberty in primary school as part of their PSHE programme so they are prepared. This is revisited at The Polesworth School in Year 7. Menstruation is also taught through the science curriculum at Key Stage 3. The school makes adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls cope with menstruation and with requests for sanitary protection.

Contraception

Teaching about contraception is part of the syllabus. Any discussion, whether at individual or group level, is permissible. It is part of the sex education programme to make all students aware of the choices available to them. Teachers can advise students where they can get professional and confidential advice regarding contraception and some of these organisations are outlined under the section on outside agencies. Any discussion with students about contraception should not become personal advice, which is viewed as an

inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibilities. Where the circumstances are such as to lead the teacher to believe that the student has embarked on or is contemplating a course of conduct which is likely to place him or her at moral or physical risk or to break the law, the teacher has a responsibility to ensure that the student is aware of the implications and to urge the student to seek advice. In such circumstances the teacher will also inform the Head of Year and a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Abortion

The religious convictions of students and parents/carers are respected and there is no religious bias in the teaching of abortion. The teaching of abortion is shaped to help students explore the dilemmas, enable them to know and understand about abortion, and to prepare them for the responsibilities and challenges of adult life.

Safer Sex and Sexually Transmitted Infections

Students will gain vital knowledge about HIV/AIDS and will understand what constitutes risky behaviour. Students will be informed about condom use and general safer sex practices Students will be taught skills to enable them to avoid peer pressure situations which could result in unwanted or unprotected sex and this will link to other issues of peer pressure such as drugs and alcohol. Students will be aware of the risks of contracting STIs and how to prevent it. They will also learn about diagnosis and treatment.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/carers

The role of parents/carers is considered to be important to support the information that is covered in lessons. The Polesworth School will always work in partnership with parents/carers, consulting them on the context of relationship and sex education programmes. Head of PSHE will assist in raising parental awareness of RSE issues.

The Head of PSHE

- The Head of PSHE will ensure that staff have the opportunity to access up to date facts, and develop their knowledge about RSE, through the organisation and provision of appropriate training as part of annual training for staff on the PSHE team prior to delivery of the relevant section on RSE.

- Liaise with curriculum support, safeguarding teams, and other outside agencies relevant to the provision of RSE and attend Warwickshire and Coventry RSHE Network Group.

- Quality Assure the effectiveness of RSE will be evaluated by considering the knowledge, skills and understanding the students have gained by checking

knowledge gained through written work, through discussion work in PSHE and through feedback from students in relation to the PSHE programme. This will be conducted through drop ins and lesson visits.

School Standards Committee

- The designated governor for RSE is Jo Collinson
- The SSC will review the RSE policy every two years (earlier if any legislation changes), make any necessary amendments and circulate to all stakeholders.

Outside Agencies

Outside agencies, e.g. health professionals, can play an important role in the delivery of RSE. Students will be made aware of local health organisations that offer professional advice and support e.g. Brook Advisory and local health centres.

Care must be taken when inviting non-teaching staff into The Polesworth School and the following steps should be taken:

- Permission sought from Strategic Leadership Team.
- The Head of PSHE informed with written details.
- Outside agencies given a copy of the RSE and safeguarding policy.
- Content known and agreed in advance with the PSHE Lead.
- Questionnaire feedback.

Withdrawal from RSE Lessons

Some parents/carers prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. Parents/carers are allowed to withdraw their child from any or all parts of The Polesworth School programme of sex education, (up to and until three terms before the age of 16) other than those elements which are required by the National Curriculum Science. For instance, at Key Stage 3 in science, students are taught about human reproduction and the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence.

Parents/carers are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses but are not able to withdraw their child.

All aspects of the RSE programme are available for scrutiny in order to help and support parents/carers in their decision. It is hoped that parents/carers will contact the schools SLT/ Head of PSHE and discuss their before making a final decision.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from sex education at The Polesworth School will need to inform the school in writing. They can only do this on 3 occasions before the students 16 birthday. The Head of PSHE will be responsible for organising alternative arrangements for students who are withdrawn, ensuring that their entitlement to all other aspects of the curriculum is not affected.

In areas of the curriculum where there is incidental reference to sex, teachers will not deal with these as sex education and therefore not necessitate withdrawal.

Confidential, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Members of staff and the Designated Safeguarding Lead are not legally bound to inform anyone if they learn of or suspect sexual activity in students under the age of consent (16 in each UK country) if there is no evidence of abuse or exploitation.

In a case where a member of staff learns from a student under the age of 16 year old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- The young person will be encouraged, 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 the Designated safeguarding Lead and social services where appropriate.
- In any case where safeguarding procedures are followed, all staff will ensure that the young person understands that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

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 Safeguarding policy.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be promoted and published throughout The Polesworth School.

Assessment for learning is carried out continuously throughout each unit and involves teacher, student and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills, and attitudes.

The Head of PSHE and the Strategic Leadership Link will monitor the implementation of this policy as part of the regular monitoring cycle.

The Strategic Leader with PSHE responsibility will assess its implementation annually and report to the Schools Standards Committee (SSC).

The SSC will review the policy within two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

External Speakers and Health Professionals

All external speakers and health professionals at The Polesworth School are advised of this policy and expected to work within it and on the instructions of the Headteacher.

When they are in their professional role, such as a school nurse in consultation with an individual, 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 RSE and Safeguarding policies.

Further Information

Governmental guidance for school on Sex and Relationship Education.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sex-and-relationship-education

Appendix 1 Year 7 PSHE Model

What will I be learning in Year 7 PSHE/RSE lessons?
• To develop the knowledge, understanding and skills you need to manage your life now and in the future. • To explore, clarify and if necessary, challenge, yours and others' values, attitudes, beliefs, rights, and responsibilities. • To develop skills, language, and strategies you need in order to live a healthy, safe, fulfilling, responsible and balanced life. • To develop positive personal attributes such as resilience, self-confidence, self-esteem, and empathy.
How will I be assessed in PSHE/RSE lessons?
• Each lesson will start with a do now activity which will base line a new topic. • You will also at times answer recall questions. • Throughout the lesson you will answer questions to assess your understanding of the topic. • You will be given scenarios to apply what you have learnt. • You will have opportunities to collaborate in think, pair, share and small group activities. • You will complete a review activity. • Your work will be reviewed for misunderstanding and misconceptions. • You will be given a glossary of subject specific key words to extend your vocabulary; you are expected to learn and apply theses during lessons.
The sequencing of sessions in PSHE/RSE Lessons
1. Introduction to PSHE or Transition to a new school
2. Bullying and the imbalance of power
3. The impact of bullying
4. How to identify, express and manage my emotions in a constructive way- Part 1
5. How to identify, express and manage my emotions in a constructive way – Part 2
6. Self-efficacy and self-esteem
7. Basic first aid – primary survey and recovery position
8. Basic first aid – CPR and AED's
9. Living in a diverse society – protected characteristics – Equality Act 2010
10. Healthy lifestyle – diet and dental health
11. Healthy lifestyle – physical activity and sleep
12. Healthy lifestyle – smoking and vaping
13. Healthy lifestyle – caffeine and energy drinks
14. Healthy lifestyle – alcohol
15. Exploring careers and workplace skills
16. Exploring careers - self-awareness – how our values can affect our career choices
17. Exploring careers – career aspirations – setting SMART targets
18. Exploring finance – cost of living
19. Exploring finance – financial services and products

The sequencing of sessions in RSE Mornings	
RSE Morning One	**RSE Morning Two**
Puberty Physical and Emotional Changes	Boundaries, personal space, and privacy
Personal Hygiene and Menstrual Wellbeing	FGM
Consent	Understanding harassment

PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Education) at The Polesworth School is a planned, developmental programme of learning through which our students acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives now and in the future.

The programme is delivered through all curriculum areas ensuring that the specialist teaching delivers the expertise that our students deserve. The delivery of RSE and Personal Development components of the curriculum is delivered in Years 7 8 9 by tutors every two weeks. They also have two enrichment days per year delivered by specialist staff. The Head of PSHE delivers the curriculum in Years 10 11 12 and 13, taking in local context and need (driven by data from JSNA and Public Health Dats).

The strong professional relationship between teachers and students is central to RSE and PD allowing the learning to extend beyond the academic, vocational or technical curriculum and allowing students to engage with views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own in considered ways within a secure environment.

The planning and delivery of PSHE will be sequenced and spiralled throughout the student's time at The Polesworth School and commits to teaching from the starting point of the law; the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty paying due diligence to the protected characteristics as defined in law, ensuring students know that no form of discrimination is tolerated. All of the content should underpin the wider work of the school helping to foster student wellbeing, develop resilience and character. Central to this is the student's ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal, supporting the whole school ethos of a culture of excellence.

For a detail overview and further information on the PSHE and RSE curriculum please follow the link below:

https://thepolesworthschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Parental-information-RSE-for-Website.pdf