



Leigh Academy
RAINHAM

Leigh Academy Rainham

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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1. Aims

The aim of RSE is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships, and to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing. Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by students if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing in conjunction with teaching them to respect themselves and others, moving forward with confidence from childhood, through adolescence into adulthood.

The Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school and we uphold it as an entitlement for all our students. We recognise the need to work as a whole school community to ensure a shared understanding of RSE and the under-pinning values and to deliver an effective programme that meets the needs of our students.

Through effective delivery of our RSE within the PSHE programme it is Leigh Academy Rainham's mission to:

- Empower young people who are growing up in an increasingly complex world, giving them the tools to live their lives seamlessly on and offline.
- Through an evidenced based approach, we will establish safe learning environments to provide students with the opportunity to be equipped with factual information, knowing when and how to seek support in specific situations.
- Support students to develop an understanding of how to live a safe and healthy lifestyle, in addition to having successful personal, social and academic lives.
- Prompt students to explore the risks and challenges in life around aspects of relationships and sex; in which we aim to foster resilience and character in overcoming and avoiding difficulties in these areas.
- Develop the IB learner attributes such as being principled, open-minded and caring.

2. Definition

We define Relationships and Sex Education as imparting information that promotes an understanding of the healthy relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It will support the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involve the sharing of information in conjunction with exploring issues and values enabling students to make appropriate and safe choices. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

3. Legislation

The Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education.

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- [Education Act \(1996\)](#)
- [Sex and Relationship Guidance \(2000\)](#)

- [Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century](#)
- [Equality act \(2010\)](#)
- [Children and social work act \(2017\)](#)
- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges \(2018\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education- statutory safeguarding guidance \(2020\)](#)
- [Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation \(2020\)](#)
- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education statutory Guidance \(2020\)](#)

It is worth noting that we are awaiting the release of the 2024 government guidance on gender questioning which will also be added to the legislation section detailed above.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has delegated the approval of this policy to the Principal.

4.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from components of RSE (see section 8). They are responsible for the annual review of this policy for approval by Governors.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way that is not influenced by their own personal beliefs and attitudes
- 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/non-science components of RSE
- Openly sharing any concerns they may have about teaching RSE with the Principal as delivery of this curriculum is not optional.

4.4 Students

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

5. Engaging Stakeholders

Dissemination and review of this policy includes:

- Review of RSE curriculum content with staff and students.
- Student Leadership Council

- Consultation with school governors.
- Questionnaires to parents/carers.

The policy will remain available through the academy website for parents at all times. There they will also be able to access an overview of what is being taught at various learning points throughout the year, enabling parents to review resources and which topics are being taught.

Governors have also been involved in the content and creation of this policy and have the opportunity to raise questions in termly meetings with the head of department. As referred to earlier in the policy, students will also have a say in the design of the curriculum through student voice panels. This will enable teachers to identify where students feel there is a need for further support or adaptation to the structure of the curriculum and topics included.

6. RSE Curriculum Intent

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. The biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in PSHE lessons and SMSC form time sessions.

Students receive 1 hour per fortnight of discrete PSHE lessons in both: KS3 [Year 7-Year 9] and KS4 [Year 10-Year 11] through which we will adopt a spiralled approach to learning in the design of the RSE curriculum, and content is shaped in relation to guidance from the PSHE association. Through our spiralled approach, the RSE curriculum meets the personal development needs of students at age appropriate times in their lives. By having form tutors deliver this to their form groups, the aim is to provide a safe and supportive learning environment where young people develop the confidence to ask questions, challenge information shared, express their own views and experiences, and put what they have learned into practice within their own lives. In doing so, students will keep both themselves and others safe, living happy fulfilling lives.

Parents, students and stakeholders are all able to explore the curriculum areas and RSE lessons taught by accessing our school personal development page [here](#). In addition parents are able to comment on what is being taught and are allowed to request access to the lesson content and resources teachers use to deliver that particular topic, please email info@leighacademyrainham.org.uk and specify for PSHE lead for more information.

Study within the RSE curriculum will include:

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

Personal and Social Skills:

- Develop self respect and empathy for others
- Develop awareness of resilience and how this impacts wellbeing and relationships
- Being able to challenge own negative thoughts regarding body image, negative comments or judgements
- Explore a range of coping strategies for difficult situations, such as conflict, including knowing where to get help or support
- Identify what makes positive and negative relationships and explore roles within them
- Being able to recognise and avoid abuse and exploitation

Knowledge and Understanding:

- Examine responsibilities for online and personal safety
- Examine the changes both emotionally and physically throughout puberty and ways to manage these
- Acquire knowledge about safer sex and sexual health to ensure they are equipped to make informed healthy choices as they progress through adult life
- The dangers of pornography and laws related to this
- Consent and healthy sexual relationships
- The dangers of sexting and impacts of this legally, personally and emotionally
- Pregnancy, miscarriage, contraception methods
- Examine diversity in terms of sexual orientation and gender identification
- FGM and the risks this poses for young people
- Understanding what is sexual exploitation; including the dangers of grooming, trafficking and coercion

7. RSE Curriculum Implementation

Lessons will be varied in approach and delivery, including a mixture of discussion based learning, video clips and written tasks. Scenario based learning features heavily too, allowing students to apply knowledge learnt to situations that could occur during their own lives. An overview of the sequence of learning and topics included for each stage of learning can be found on the academy website for PSHRE.

7.1 Appropriate use of language

The language used across the academy during implementation of the RSE curriculum must be acceptable and appropriate. All staff will:

- 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 RSE and will have benefits for the whole school community – both in and out of lessons. Ofsted found that casual use of homophobic language in schools is often unchallenged (2013) and as an academy we are committed to ensuring this is not the case for example students need to be educated that using the word ‘gay’, to mean something is rubbish is wrong.

7.2 Safe and Effective Implementation

The delivery of the RSE curriculum will be completed by a designated PSHE teacher, who will be well trained and supported by the line manager of the subject area. No teachers will be forced to deliver content in an area they feel is inappropriate or uncomfortable doing so. The safety of students will be paramount, and we will ensure that a safe learning environment is established with all classes. At the start of the year students will be asked to actively support the creation of class rules, which will be referred to frequently in the subsequent lessons and topics, adapted as necessary. It will also be made clear to students that a level of anonymity should be used where possible, creating ‘distancing’ from individuals within the school or local setting. The approach of “In a school similar to ours” or “students of a similar age to yourselves” to support this nature.

Students will have the opportunity to ask questions anonymously at various stages of their learning, supported in doing so through class “question” boxes, which will then be answered at appropriate times by the teacher. Whilst all teachers will be clear on establishing a safe learning environment, it will be made clear to students that information may be passed on to safeguarding colleagues in the event that it is required.

8. Safeguarding

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

Teachers who deliver RSE are fully aware and trained to know that topics involved could lead to various child protection and safeguarding disclosures. In the ‘safe and effective practice’ section, it is outlined how risk to students and staff within lessons is minimised. In the event that a disclosure or event occurs that requires the support of the safeguarding team the practices outlined in the academy safeguarding policy will be implemented and staff will follow the policy with regard to confidentiality. Students should also be made aware of the boundaries of confidentiality should they choose to make a disclosure to a member of staff. A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns exist.

Any visitors coming to the academy to support RSE learning will need to be CRB checked, and will always be supported by a member of staff when in contact with students. Information that is to be shared by external visitors will need to be shared with the head of department prior to delivery.

9. Parents right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE. However it is important to note that withdrawal cannot take place when learning about relationships. The right to withdraw can only take place when students are being taught about sex education.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the PSHE teacher: Mrs Allchin, Assistant Principal i/c of Personal Development: Ms Pozetti and the Principal. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. A member of the leadership team will discuss the request with parents and the benefits of receiving such education will be expressed by the academy and any detrimental effects this could have for the child. Once discussions have taken place, the school will take the appropriate action and respect the parents wishes up to and including three months prior to the child's 16th birthday. After this point, the child will determine whether they receive sex and relationships education. There is no right to withdraw from relationships or health education.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from learning regarding sex education then the parent, not the school, will be responsible for providing their child their own alternative PSHE provision and education including resources they may need.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. Teachers will be required to stay up to date with global developments and laws related to the content covered, and can do this through support and guidance from the PSHE association. All of such items will be discussed at frequent departmental meetings and joint planning sessions.

The Principal 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.

11. Monitoring Arrangements

Teachers will critically reflect upon the delivery, content and curriculum design at regular intervals within the academic year. This will be influenced by student engagement and feedback, as well as that from observations and learning walks by the senior leadership team.