



Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

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Introduction

RSE has a positive and empowering role in learners' education and plays a vital role in supporting learners to realise the four purposes as part of a *whole-school approach*. Helping learners to form and maintain a range of relationships, all based on mutual trust and respect, is the foundation of RSE. These relationships are critical to the development of emotional well-being, resilience, and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and equity empowers learners to understand themselves, take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours, and form relationships that are fully inclusive, reflecting diversity and promoting respect.

What is RSE?

RSE encompasses the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and values that will empower learners to support their health and well-being, develop healthy, safe, and fulfilling relationships of all kinds, including those with family and friends, and in time, romantic and sexual relationships. RSE enables children and young people to navigate and make sense of how relationships, sex, gender, and sexuality shape their own and other people's identities and lives. Children and young people will understand and support their rights and those of others to enjoy equitable, safe, healthy, and fulfilling relationships throughout their lives and advocate for these.

Why is RSE important?

The world around us is ever changing and as a society we are becoming more aware of:

- The change in family structures and relationships.
- The shift in social, cultural religious norms in relation to sex, gender and sexuality.
- The advances in technology including the rising influence of social media and increased use of digital communications.

- The change to laws and rights around relationships, sex, gender and sexuality.

RSE supports children and young people to navigate all of these changes. Through understanding how relationships are formed, developed and maintained it enables children and young people to develop their skills and attitudes to support themselves in their own relationships throughout their lives. Learning about different relationships and sexuality supports young people to develop the knowledge and skills needed to make sense of their thoughts and feelings and to effectively navigate rapidly changing influences. Learners need to be supported to respond to these and, where appropriate, feel equipped to challenge harmful stereotypes and perceptions and seek help and support.

RSE provision helps to ensure learners develop a positive understanding of relationships and sexuality and to recognise misconceptions. RSE aims to empower learners in line with their needs, experiences and wider development. Through discussion and by responding to learners' questions and needs, it can provide safe and empowering environments that enable learners to reflect on and express their views and feelings on a range of issues.

RSE at St Andrew's Major

RSE will be taught by creating safe and empowering environments that support learners' rights to enjoy fulfilling, healthy and safe relationships throughout their lives. This is critical to building a society which treats others with understanding and empathy, whatever their ethnicity, social economic background, disability, or sex, gender or sexuality.

Teaching and learning in RSE will be supported by a whole-school approach which is critical to learners' well-being. Therefore, we will link all aspects of school, including the curriculum, policy, staff, school environment and community, to support learners in their relationships and sexuality education. As a school we will reinforce a consistent, positive ethos and provide holistic high-quality support for learners.

Relationships and sexuality education will include developmentally appropriate learning for children between the ages of 3 and 11 years old. RSE focuses on three broad strands:

- Relationships and identity: helping learners develop the skills they need to develop healthy, safe, and fulfilling relationships with others and helping them to make sense of their thoughts and feelings.
 Including: The range of relationships that human beings have throughout their lives, how identity can be shaped by our relationships and sexuality and the importance of human rights in securing healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships in an inclusive society.
- Sexual health and well-being: helping learners to draw on factual sources regarding their sexual and reproductive health and well-being, allowing them to make informed decisions throughout their lives.
 Including: learning about how living things grow, reproduce and have a life cycle, developing an understanding of the human body, including people's feelings about their bodies and how these can be represented. Learners will learn about health issues related to relationships and sexuality and develop an understanding of how sexuality and sexual health affects our well-being.
- Empowerment, safety and respect: helping to protect learners from all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect and enabling them to recognise unsafe or harmful relationships and situations, supporting them to recognise when, how and where to seek support and advice.
 Including: Learners' rights to safety and protection and freedom from harm and discrimination, how and where to seek information, help and support. Children and young people will learn how to support and advocate for the rights, fair treatment and respect of all.

RSE skills will be taught across the curriculum through the 6 Areas of Learning Experiences (AoLEs) (Expressive Arts, Health and Well-being, Humanities, Language, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics and Numeracy and Science and Technology).

For example, through expressive arts learners can use the creative process to explore, articulate and reflect on experiences and feelings that they may not share in other approaches. This can also provide an understanding of learners knowledge about RSE as well as their learning needs.

Through humanities learners can begin to understand societal understandings of relationships, sex, gender and sexuality have changed over time and how they continue to evolve.

Through language, literacy and communication learners will be able to analyse and explore a range of media, style and genres including lessons on exploring body images or relationship stereotypes. They could do this through exploring cartoons, films, poetry, fiction, documentaries and increasingly digital platforms or communication and storytelling.

RSE will also be taught through a rights-based approach using the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Through using a rights-based approach RSE will provide learners with a way of exploring RSE issues, helping them to develop the skills for healthy relationships, respect and understanding of others and to recognise healthy and harmful behaviours. Learners will develop an understanding of how rights are related to all aspects of RSE and contribute to the well-being and safety of all people.

All information is adapted from Relationships and sexuality education (RSE): statutory guidance Welsh Government 2022.