

RELATIONSHIPS and SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

Context

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationship and Sex Education, not only in lessons but through the attitude of our staff and students alike, our ethos and approach and commitment to equality both within and outside of the classroom. It is important that we approach this subject with a clear and unified voice, and it is equally important that we provide unambiguous guidance for the benefit of our staff, parents and carers, and ultimately, our children.

At Giggleswick School we recognise all relationships that are founded in mutual and consensual love as being equal and valid in all respects. We recognise that individuals may identify with genders that differ from that assigned at birth, and we celebrate people's right to do so. In short, we promote a culture where the breadth of relationships, sexualities and genders are not merely tolerated but are celebrated as being integral to the tapestry of society. We believe that this culture will help allow children to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Whilst as a school we are aware we need to be mindful of and respectful to a wide variety of faith and cultural beliefs, and we will make every attempt to be appropriately sensitive; equally it is essential that young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

We acknowledge that all young people deserve the right to honest, open and factual information to help better form their own beliefs and values, free from bias, judgement or subjective personal beliefs of those who teach them.

This policy was produced following guidance from the Department for Education (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019) and through consultation with our staff, governing body, and most importantly with our pupils and parents.

It will be reviewed on a regular basis (in one year in the first instance and then every two years thereafter) to ensure that it reflects the attitudes and belief of the school population and remains up to date with both current guidance from the Government and the DfE but also remains relevant to the experiences of our pupils.

We recognise that as a school we have a legal responsibility under The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 & 35 of the Children & Social Work Act 2017, to provide comprehensive Relationship Education and Health Education for all pupils receiving primary education. We recognise that we have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the best for all pupils irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion, sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children. As a result, RSE needs to be sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may need to adapt and change as the pupils of the school change. Not only does the teaching need to be sensitive of these needs, but also to help the pupils realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours or prejudice-based language.

Definition

The Department for Education defines relationships education as, *teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults.*

However, we believe relationships education is designed to help children to develop the skills to recognise and manage healthy relationships both online and in the real world. It is designed to build self-esteem and to explore personal identity. Relationships education about helping children understand and make sense of the world they are growing up in; to recognise the differences and similarities between their peers and their families; to understand the fact every human being is unique and has the right to be respected. There are many different family structures (e.g. same-sex, adopted, multicultural) and all children have the right to feel safe.

Furthermore, we define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health.¹ We take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way and using a gender equity and human rights framework. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.

Relationships education has been shown to help keep children safe by allowing them to understand appropriate and inappropriate touching, to realise that their body is special and belongs to them. It is about building the foundations of an understanding of consent and personal boundaries; in that no one has the right to touch them in a way they do not like but also the difference between public and private behaviours. This is supported by workshops delivered by external agencies.

The responsibility for organising and delivering most, if not all, of the RSE programme rests with the school but there may be times when an external contributor may be used. The work of any external agencies will be tailored to the target audience and a member of school staff will be present if an external contributor works with pupils. The visiting speaker register will be completed prior to the visit and all school protocols followed.

It is important for children to know the names and functions of their body parts and to be reassured it is natural to be curious about them. Indeed, by teaching children the correct terms for their private body parts, children are proven to be safer from abuse.

In addition, we believe that relationships education helps children to develop their vocabulary and emotional literacy to enable them to talk about and manage their feelings. It helps children build their own support networks and the confidence to ask for help when they feel unsafe. This is a required element of the Health Education Guidance.

We believe that RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to an RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBT+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND

Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE. An inclusive RSE at Giggleswick School will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

Objectives

RSE involves some key elements:

- Learning and developing an understanding of the attitudes and values relating to family life, marriage, stable and loving relationships and respect and fosters gender equality and LGBT
- To respect and care for their bodies
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood
- Exploring and developing the social and personal skills needed to make informed choices
- Increasing knowledge and understanding about physical development, sexuality and emotions

Delivery of RSE and the Curriculum

To cover the curriculum content outlined in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our pupils to build positive and respectful relationships online and offline. We seek to ensure that it gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- realise their health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal and sexual identity and the personal/sexual identities of others
- understand family structures, committed relationships and the legal status of different types of long-term relationships
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

We believe that high quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Evidence shows that effective RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school Pastoral Curriculum embedded within the school's framework for PSHE (Curriculum for Life) and the Science curriculum.

- The RSE curriculum is delivered through Science and PSHE (C4L) lessons
- School teaching staff deliver the RSE programme and their training requirements are met
- The RSE curriculum with clear learning outcomes is kept electronically on the school's intranet
- A range of appropriate resources and active learning methods is used following a needs analysis
- Effective provision is ensured for all learners (including SEND, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation)

The curriculum programme is developed by Jennifer Cooper in conjunction with the views of teachers, pupils and parents. At Giggleswick School we will meet the learning objectives and content outlined in the Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education and Health Education Guidance. All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils, including those pupils with SEND.

Topics include:

- relationships, love and care and the responsibilities of parenthood as well as sex
- self-esteem
- the taking on of responsibility and the consequences of one's actions in relation to sexual activity and parenthood
- contraception, safe sex and how they can access local sources of further advice and treatment
- understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure
- peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol
- how the law applies to sexual relationships

RSE will be delivered at Giggleswick School as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all key stages, using a spiral curriculum approach. The subject lead will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas (science, computing, PE and citizenship) to ensure a holistic and joined up approach to what is taught in RSE. We also supplement learning through using a whole school approach and utilising time outside of the classroom, such as chapel, tutor time, school assemblies, through art and drama, and school celebrations and theme days. RSE will address aspects of relationships and sex in an integrated way within a single topic. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. We also use external agencies where appropriate to deliver aspects of Relationships and Sex Education (see section below). The programme will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (for example when teaching about external body parts). School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when teaching RSE.

Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing RSE

Progress in RSE will be assessed and monitored:

- As an integral part of teaching and learning
- By providing regular opportunities for pupils to give and receive feedback
- By involving pupils in discussion about learning objectives and desired outcomes and through self-assessment

The PSHE subjects leads will be responsible for monitoring the provision of RSE and for reporting the results to the Headmaster and the Deputy Head. They are responsible for evaluating the programme of work, reporting the findings on an annual basis, and for making recommendations for changes to the programme.

The RSE programme is regularly monitored and evaluated. The views of pupils, parents and teachers are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis. The policy will be formally reviewed every two years, ensuring it meets the needs of the pupils, staff and parents and is in line with DfE guidance:

- To review and plan the content and delivery of the programme of study for sex and relationships education
- To review resources and renew as appropriate
- To update training in line with current guidance and staff identified needs

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Monitoring

We regularly monitor our RSE scheme of work to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, that the curriculum is meeting the new national requirements under the Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education guidance, and that learning outcomes are reflective of pupil need. This policy will be reviewed by the school's leadership team in conjunction with subject lead and Governors on a regular basis. If changes are needed, members of staff, parents/carers and pupils will be consulted and any subsequent changes made clearly communicated. The Senior Leadership Team monitors the implementation of the programme through:

- Lesson observations
- Planning scrutiny
- Looking at samples of pupils' work
- Analysing pupil attendance in lessons

Evaluating

Evaluation of our programme is crucial to ensure that we can continue to improve on provision and teaching effectiveness. The evaluation process involves structured and informal pupil and staff feedback including:

- Teacher evaluation of lessons and the overall RSE programme
- Evidence from lesson observations
- Feedback and evaluation by pupils (using pupil interviews, questionnaires/ surveys, focus groups or using pupil question boxes.)
- Scrutiny of pupil assessment records
- Sampling pupil work and portfolios

Pupil Assessment

Giggleswick School uses a range of assessment methods to get regular feedback on pupil progress in RSE. We also use pupil assessment to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention. Lessons are planned to ensure that pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. Assessment methods used include:

- Project work
- Written assignments
- Students' pre and post unit self-evaluation

Pupil Voice

Pupil voice is central to the culture and ethos of Giggleswick School. We use pupil voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging RSE is to children's lives. Throughout our RSE scheme of work we embed pupil voice practices to enable students to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers and to ensure that they listen to other opinions and evidence, reflect on their own perspectives and take a broader view. We want to ensure that all pupil voices are heard but that those views that are hurtful, offensive or exclusionary do not dominate and are addressed. We want to ensure a culture where human rights, social justice, inclusion and diversity are promoted.

Answering Pupil Questions

RSE explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural
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curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others. As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way and take into account whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons. School staff will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their students that could make either party vulnerable. We believe that an open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older students. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in RSE. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm and abuse when they are able to discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment

Working with Parents/Carers

We believe that the successful teaching of RSE involves parents/ carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/carers can play an important role in the RSE of their children through exploring discussions at home that have taken place in school. Our RSE policy has been developed through consulting parents and carers. We work with parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of what we teach and when through the following methods:

- Online Surveys
- Sharing copies of the policy

Letters to parents/carers giving information about when RSE will be delivered and when certain classes (including classes that involve sex education) will take place in the Spring Term.

If parents/carers have any concerns or special circumstances the school should be aware of, or would like any further information about the curriculum, we will have a designated time for them to come into the school. We may share examples of some of the key resources we use with parents/carers to reassure them of the content and to enable them to continue the conversations started in class at home.

Parental Right to request their child be excused from sex education

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE. Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education. All children will have the right to opt into sex education three terms before they turn 16 and the school will make arrangements for this to happen. In practice, this means that when a child turns 15 they have the right to be taught sex education if they want to. Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice. Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the headteacher to discuss their concerns. The headteacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum. If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the headteacher in writing and the school will keep a record of this. Except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three

terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. We will remind parents annually that the request to withdraw is still in place and invite them to confirm whether they still want it.

Parents can withdraw students from any units **except** for:

Key Stage 3:

- that fertilisation in humans is the fusion of a male and a female cell
- about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
- about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation
- how the foetus develops in the uterus
- how the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health

Key Stage 4:

- The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones
- Some medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility
- The defence mechanisms of the body
- How sex is determined in humans

There is no right to withdraw from the National Curriculum (as outlined above).

Working with visitors and external agencies

From time-to-time the school may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSE scheme of work. External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our RSE by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school. A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons so as to build on the pupil's learning after the session/s as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have. Any external visitor will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy. We will also ensure that:

- There is appropriate planning, preparatory and follow up work for the session
- The visitor understands the cohort of children involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics. They will also be made aware of any specific issues relating to child protection.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Giggleswick School acknowledges that RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. RSE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse, or have experienced, abuse. We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the school's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. It is the responsibility of the school to support its pupils by safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils. In fulfilling this duty, they must have regard to the safeguarding policy. Whilst pupils have the same rights to confidentiality as adults no pupil should be guaranteed absolute confidentiality.

Staff will report any information or disclosure which raises concern that a child or children may be at risk of significant harm to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL will then

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take action in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy, which follows the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance and procedures.

Pupils will be made aware of the law relating to sexual offences and of those circumstances where confidentiality cannot be maintained. Staff should ensure when making notes that they are factual and based on evidence.

We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.

RSE can be a sensitive issue. To protect privacy and engender respect for all, teachers will be expected to establish ground rules to establish a safe learning environment. Distancing techniques will be used to de-personalise the situation under discussion and allow pupils to explore their feelings about an issue. Pupils should be informed about the remit of confidentiality and that teachers cannot offer or guarantee pupils unconditional confidentiality.

While Giggleswick School wants to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy. At Giggleswick School we do this by using a number of teaching techniques including the use of a working agreement, where rights respecting ground rules are created with pupils on what makes a safe and welcoming environment for all. If pupils ask particularly sensitive questions that appear to be inappropriate in the circumstances, teachers will deal with this outside the classroom on a one-to-one basis. If the teacher judges it necessary the pupil could be advised to speak to the school doctor, provided with information about where to get further help or, if the matter is considered a potential Child Protection issue, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be notified. Through the use of ground rules and other approaches, such as distancing techniques, we believe the school can create a supportive environment for discussions that can be sensitive or difficult.

Roles and Responsibilities

The PSHE Co-ordinator (Junior School) and (Senior School)

They are responsible for all aspects of the subject including RSE. In respect of RSE, responsibilities are to:

- Ensure the implementation and quality of long term and medium term RSE schemes of work
- Ensure that all staff are confident in the skills to teach and discuss RSE issues
- Consider the needs of all pupils, and to achieve this recognise that the school might need to address some specific issues
- Consult with pupils about RSE provision
- Consult with parents prior to delivery of RSE provision
- Access appropriate training
- Monitor and advise on RSE organisation, planning and resource issues across the school
- Ensure procedures for assessment, monitoring and evaluation are included
- Liaise with any service provision to support aspects of sexual health
- Review / update the policy on a two-year cycle or sooner if necessary

The Headmaster/Deputy Head

Responsibilities in respect of RSE are to:

- Liaise with the PSHE Co-ordinator/Head of C4L
- Keep the governing body fully informed of provision, issues and progress in RSE
- Act upon any concerns which may arise from pupil disclosure during RSE sessions

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The Governing Body

The governing body has responsibility to ensure a school has an up-to-date RSE policy that describes the content and organisation of RSE in the PSHE curriculum. The policy should also clearly reference any on site sexual health services.

The governing body, in co-operation with the Headmaster, is expected to involve families, pupils, health and other professionals to ensure that RSE addresses the needs of pupils, local issues and trends.

The governing body need to ensure pupils are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age, religious and cultural background of the pupils. It is good practice to identify a link governor for RSE. The governing body will evaluate RSE provision and policy through its Boarding & Pastoral Committee.

Additional guidance

Diversity

Children and young people from all faiths and cultures have an entitlement to sex and relationships education (RSE). Teaching effective RSE means being sensitive to the range of different values and beliefs within a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. It is important when developing the RSE curriculum to work in partnership with parents and the wider community.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

All families are different so it is important to avoid using language which focuses on the conventional mum and dad family structure and instead talk about families more broadly. The school will provide pupils with the opportunities to learn about different family structures. For older pupils when discussing sexual relationships reference and resources are used that relate to LGBT people.

Reviewed by: FG Mundell, PSHE Co-ordinator (Junior School),
JL Cooper, Head of Curriculum 4 Life (Senior School)
JR Mundell (Head of GJS)

Review period: Two-yearly

Updated: August 2021

Next review date: August 2023 (or following expected new Government guidance)

Approved: February 2022 (at the Boarding & Pastoral Committee) - pending

Sources of information:

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Plan your RSE curriculum government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-your-relationships-sex-and-health-curriculum>

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

Additional guidance: North Yorkshire Health Schools:
<http://healthyschoolsnorthyorks.org/pshe-resources/>