

RSE Policy Senior School

This policy is part of the senior school approach to SMSC and should be read alongside the PSHCE, anti-bullying and behaviour policies.

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INDEPENDENT BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AGED 2 – 18

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Registered in England No. 11250194 • Registered Office: Abbotsholme School, Rocester, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire ST14 5BS

Reviewed by KH, Assistant Head, 04/01/2023

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I. Introduction

The department fully endorses the school's general aims and seeks to support and demonstrate the aims and values of the school. It forms part of the pastoral care system and the school's wider approach to keeping pupils safe and happy.

The school recognises that young people today are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living lives in parallel on and off-line. This presents both positive and exciting opportunities, but also potential risks. Learning and participating in our PSHCE Education and RSE programme provides pupils with an opportunity to follow a syllabus which has been designed to ensure that there is necessary preparation for life to come.

Educating our pupils to know how to stay safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way is of utmost importance. The school works to ensure that all content in the programme is age-appropriate and is taught in a sensitive and inclusive way.

Our PSHCE Education and RSE programme are designed to complement and reinforce the role played by parents, guardians, house parents and carers. The school continues to seek and investigate opportunities for parental involvement.

The curriculum programme focuses on a number of key areas:

- Online safety
- Drugs awareness
- Emotional and mental wellbeing
- Transition periods
- Development of key personal skills and attributes
- Development of resilience and character
- Identity
- Diversity
- Respectful relationships
- Risk taking
- Knowledge about sexual health and sexual relationships
- Ethical issues
- Mental and physical health and well being

The programme also complements areas covered in other subjects:

- Careers Education
- Importance of physical exercise and fitness
- Healthy eating

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- Puberty
- Contraception

The school actively promotes the Fundamental British Values (FBV) of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It also encourages respect for others with regard to protected characteristics. These are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

Lastly, the school aims to provide a safe place in which pupils can learn, understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge them. The school makes reference to the Prevent Duty Guidance, where we have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. It also adheres to guidance from KCSIE (2022), which clearly states opportunities to teach safeguarding within the RSE curriculum which should include all statutory guidance, preventative education, remote education and online safety (points 129- 148).

This policy seeks to set out details about how RSE Education is incorporated into the Senior School PSHCE Education programme.

2. Aims

Sex and relationships education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of the PSHCE programme.

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.

The aims of the programme are to:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and in society
- Prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life
- Provide pupils with the information they need to help develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships
- Enable pupils to know what a good relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship

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- Provide guidance on how to resist pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure)
- Provide guidance on how to develop appropriate intimate relationships
- Teach about the use of contraception during intimate relationships
- Teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. By understanding what a healthy relationship is, pupils can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. Pupils will be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing
- Help pupils to understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed
- Look at grooming and sexual exploitation
- Address physical and emotional damage caused by FGM
- Teach the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way
- Cover key aspects of the law relating to sex:
 - age of consent
 - what consent is and is not
 - definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment
 - choices permitted by the law around pregnancy

The aim of PSHCE is to encourage respect for other people with regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. These are addressed through the curriculum and include all aspects listed in section 4: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

3. Policy development

- This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, with reference to key Government guidance and from a range of sources including the PSHE Association and KCSIE (2022)
- This policy is to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of PSHE and Senior Leadership Team.
- Parents and the board at the school have been invited to read the policy and return feedback.
- Pupils are consulted on an annual basis and given the opportunity to feedback.
- The policy is available on the school website.

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4. Curriculum and delivery

Pupils in the Senior School are taught in timetabled lessons once a week. These take place within mixed gender classes, however, alternative grouping can be facilitated if deemed necessary. RSE Education is taught at various different points in the year and builds on knowledge covered in previous topics.

Schemes of work are followed as per Appendix I, however, the programme is flexible to allow the school to respond to pupil need and related incidents.

There are opportunities to use tutorial time in addition to timetable lessons and specific aspects are delivered by:

- Visiting speakers
- Health care professionals
- Health Centre
- Presentations and workshops

The Head of PSHCE provides guidance to tutors on content for tutorial sessions related to PSHCE and organises the visiting speakers in conjunction with the School Health Advisor.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Staff are responsible for delivering the RSE content in a sensitive, non-judgemental and factual way which allows scope for pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.

There are clear guidelines for RSE Education lessons and pupils are reminded of these, and distancing techniques are employed so that pupils are not put on the spot or feel the need to disclose personal information in front of other pupils.

Tasks and resources are carefully chosen. Active learning methods that support participation and encourage reflection are used. Technology is used to help pupils access resources and engage with confidence. The Head of Department is a member of the PSHE Association and has access to all 'quality assured resources'. There may be occasions where pupils ask questions which cannot be answered; skill and discretion are needed. Professional organisations such as Brook and the Sex Education Forum are useful points of contact for further advice.

If there are any safeguarding concerns whatsoever, these concerns are reported immediately and not discussed with other members of staff, in line with the School's policy. Staff will be reminded of these correct procedures if any allegations or disclosures of abuse are made.

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The school recognises that RSE Education must be accessible for all pupils, including those with SEND and thus aims to provide high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised.

6. Parents' right to withdraw

Although parents will be strongly advised to allow their children to participate in the RSE Education programme, the school recognises the right of parents to withdraw their children from sex education sessions if they so wish.

Parents will be informed by letter or school post when RSE is to take place in the school year. This will enable them to contact the school should they wish to withdraw their children before the unit of work begins. They will be invited in to discuss this with the Head of Department or one of the pastoral team where appropriate.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

This policy and the curriculum programme are reviewed annually by the Head of Department and Pastoral team to ensure that legislative changes are met. The next review date is January 2024 unless statutory guidance is added to.

The school has worked to ensure that the PSHCE programme takes into account the statutory guidance for all schools, which became mandatory in 2020.

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