

# Relationships and sex education policy

## Northgate School



<b>Approved by:</b>	Management Committee	<b>Date:</b> October 2021
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	September 2021	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	September 2023	

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### 1. Aims

Northgate School recognises Relationship and Sex Education [RSE] is an essential part of lifelong learning about the physical, moral, emotional, social and cultural development of students. We recognise that it contributes to every student's health, wellbeing and ability to be able to make well-informed decisions about their lives.

At Northgate RSE involves learning about what makes a healthy relationship, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity through a combination of acquiring knowledge and information, sharing information, developing skills, and exploring issues, beliefs, attitudes and values in a safe and inclusive environment. We also work with a range of external providers such as Brook who support and enhance our delivery of RSE.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation or gender identity. Instead it is about creating a safe space for young people to explore issues and beliefs around sexual health to support them making safe and informed choices in their future.

The aims of our RSE curriculum at Northgate is to:

- Provide a framework and safe space in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Ensure that young people have an understanding of puberty, sexual development, the nature of consent and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

## 2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained secondary school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

## 3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – a focus group of staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to review and comment on the policy
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE through student voice forums
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the management committee and ratified

## 4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

## 5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary. Being a Pupil Referral Unit we recognise that young people will attend Northgate for varying lengths of time and will have various levels of RSE from other mainstream providers.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Through our core curriculum we deliver aspects of RSE. We also work closely with Brook who deliver drop down days where students learn about issues surrounding consent, contraception, health relationships and staying safe online. We work with Brook to tailor our curriculum to meet the ever changing needs of our students in an age appropriate manner.

## 6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional. At Northgate we have worked closely with Brook who have provided staff training on RSE as well as delivering regular RSE sessions to students.

For more information about our RSE and our core curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

### 7.1 The Management Committee

The Management Committee will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

### 7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE (see section 8).

### 7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/ components of RSE
- Establishing ground rules for discussions in RSE to ensure that a safe space is established
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL in line with the schools safeguarding policy
- Ensure that all discussions are depersonalised to established clear parameters for discussions
- If a teacher is concerned about a student who is struggling with their sexuality or gender identity and that this is affecting their physical and/or mental wellbeing, staff should pass this information to the DSL or Dep DSL. Questions, which have some relevance to sexual matters may arise during discussion. In order to avoid any question of parental withdrawal from such lessons, the law requires that 'such discussion is relatively limited and set within the context of the subject concerned'.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher.

**The staff member responsible for RSE at Northgate School is Assistant Headteacher.**

### 7.4 Students

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

#### Sensitive issues, confidentiality and advice to students

- (a) Sensitive issues may include: Puberty, menstruation, sexual intercourse, contraception, abortion, safer sex, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), abuse, awareness of sexuality or gender identity. Teachers should understand the difference between stating facts and stating opinions. If work in sensitive areas of the curriculum causes teachers any concerns, they should discuss them with their line manager or a senior leader.

(b) Confidentiality: If a student makes a personal disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff cannot offer or guarantee unconditional confidentiality. The member of staff must refer to the DSL as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

(c) Advice to students: Through the pastoral support system, students will be given full information related to RSE elements.

## **8. Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

## **9. Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher 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.

At Northgate School staff have been trained by Brook and they also provide additional sessions to support RSE.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Assistant Headteacher through:

- Learning walks
- Evaluations and feedback from sessions by external providers
- Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the Assistant Headteacher every two years.

At every review, the policy will be approved by The Management Committee.

## Appendix 1: Curriculum map

### Relationships and sex education core curriculum mapping

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CURRICULUM AREA	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS
PSHE	<u>AQA PSHE Unit Awards:</u> Sex and Relationship Education unit; Emotional Wellbeing; Healthy Lifestyles Personal Safety Introduction to Diversity Prejudice and Discrimination.
Science	<u>Content cross over with RSE and GCSE Science (AQA)</u> 4.5.3.3 Hormones in human reproduction (Control of menstrual cycle and fertility) 4.6.1.1 Sexual and asexual reproduction (In animals and plants) 4.6.1.6 Sex determination (XX and XY at birth) 4.3.1.2 Viral diseases (STIs) 4.3.1.3 Bacterial diseases (STIs)
Sociology	<u>GCSE AQA Sociology</u> Family and households

## Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<p>That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</p> <p>How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</p> <p>What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony</p> <p>Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</p> <p>The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</p> <p>How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed</p>
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<p>The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship</p> <p>Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</p> <p>How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)</p> <p>That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs</p> <p>About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</p> <p>That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</p> <p>What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</p> <p>The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal</p>

<p>Online and media</p>	<p>Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</p> <p>About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online</p> <p>Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</p> <p>What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</p> <p>The impact of viewing harmful content</p> <p>That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners</p> <p>That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</p> <p>How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</p>
<p>Being safe</p>	<p>The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships</p> <p>How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)</p>
<p>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</p>	<p>How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship</p> <p>That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing</p> <p>The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</p> <p>That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</p> <p>That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</p> <p>The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</p> <p>The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</p>

That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)

How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing

About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment

How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour

How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

**Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE**

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	