



Plymouth High School for Girls

“For life, not school, we learn”

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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1. Rationale and ethos

It is the policy of School Governors and a statutory requirement that all students will follow a programme of relationships and sex education. The governors feel that the school must help and support young people to learn about the challenges of growing up. Giving them the facts unambiguously and the skills, in a relaxed and secure environment in which they can confidently ask questions and be assured of answers. This is to aid making healthy decisions about their lives. Relationships and Sex Education is an integral part of the students' PSHE programme but calls for sensitive teaching as it is a sensitive issue with strong moral, legal, religious and cultural considerations. This involves acknowledging that relationships and sex education should not only give information and increase understanding, but that it should promote sensible, healthy behaviour, combat abuse and cultivate the ability to make informed decisions and develop skills for future parents and carers.

We believe the work we do on relationships and sex education allows young people to examine their own and others attitudes and make informed decisions about their lives. It enables young people to mature, build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for making decisions around their sexual activity and seek help, support and guidance when needed.

Our aim is to have a programme of Relationships and Sex Education which:

- ☐ Reinforces the school aims by promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development and wellbeing of the students at PHSG.
- ☐ Discusses matters within the context of loving, caring and healthy relationships, while being sensitive to the fact that some children in our care are from a variety of home backgrounds and family structures.
- ☐ Educates for responsible parenthood and adolescence in such a way that encourages all pupils to have due regard for the value of a stable family and secure home environment.
- ☐ Meets the needs of all individuals, and includes education, awareness and tolerance of the protected characteristics described by the Equality Act 2010.
- ☐ Involves parents and all other stakeholders in relationships and sex education issues, whilst complementing and supporting the role of parents who are key figures in helping children with physical and emotional aspects of growing up.
- ☐ Promotes health and hygiene.
- ☐ Creates an environment in school within which trust and confidence are assured.
- ☐ Has suitable material and resources appropriate to the age, maturity and background of pupils to support staff in their teaching

2. Objectives

We will deliver a programme of Relationships and Sex Education which will:

- Provide information which will help individuals to develop a moral framework from which to make rational, mature and informed decisions.
- Provide knowledge and understanding of the physical aspects of sexual behaviour and human reproduction in an objective and balanced and sensitive manner.
- Help pupils to understand their own emotional development.
- Allow students to learn about their bodies and sexuality.
- Provide information which will enable students to understand and foster tolerance of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- Use resources and language which usualises LGBT+ individuals and relationships
- Help young people promote loving, caring and healthy relationships and the idea of mutual responsibility within these relationships.
- Ensure that young people understand the implications and responsibilities of parenthood and the value of family life.
- Allowing students to learn a variety of skills to aid them in managing themselves and a healthy relationship.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Staff Responsible:

- ☐ Head Teacher.
- ☐ Head of PSHE & Citizenship.
- ☐ Teachers of PSHE & Citizenship

4. Legislation (statutory regulations and guidance)

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the following Legislation and Guidance:

- ☐ Adoption and Children's Act 2002
- ☐ Children and Families Act 2014
- ☐ Children and Social Work Act 2017
- ☐ Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- ☐ Domestic Abuse Bill 2019
- ☐ Education Act 2011
- ☐ Equality Act 2010
- ☐ Education and Inspections Act 2006
- ☐ Female Genital Mutilation Act amended 2015
- ☐ Learning and Skills Act 2000
- ☐ Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- ☐ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education 2019
- ☐ Safeguarding vulnerable groups Act 2006
- ☐ Sexual Offences Act 2003

Policy and Guidance

- Relationships education, Relationships and sex education and Health education Statutory guidance 2020 (*will need updating to 2024*)
- Working Together to safeguard children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance □ Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board – Policies and Guidance:
- <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/localsafeguardingchildrenboard/>

5. Withdrawal from RSE

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE but not from relationships education. This is done by letter to the Headteacher. Parents are informed of this procedure in the annually updated RSE letter available on the website and signposted through communication home.

Before granting any such request, the Headteacher should discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Where students are withdrawn from sex education and approach staff members with questions that would have been covered in the sex education lessons provided to their peers then staff will encourage the students to talk to their adults at home about this topic and/or provide information about how to contact the school nurse or a service such as The Zone.

The following lessons would be deemed sex education

- Readiness for sexual activity(Y9)

6. Curriculum design and content

The programme is co-ordinated by the Head of PSHE & Citizenship in conjunction with the Headteacher and link SLT. The curriculum entitlement for Relationship and Sex Education is met through the PSHE programme, the GCSE Science programme and the Religious Education programme which run concurrently.

The content is informed by the needs of students, local data and the Relationships education, Relationships and sex education and Health education Statutory guidance 2020 (*will need updating*). We use the learning objectives organised by the PSHE Association under the three strands of Living in the Wider World, Health and Wellbeing, and Relationships.

7. Safe and Effective practice

To ensure high quality teaching and learning; RSE is quality assured by HOD of PSHE and Citizenship and the link member of SLT. Regular CPD is undertaken to make sure staff are working with up to date knowledge and practice and external agencies are regularly consulted to aid good practice. The school uses the PSHE Association as a benchmark for good practice.

To ensure safe and effective practice for students and staff, ground rules are to be used where appropriate. They should be used during discussions that may include sensitive topics such as drug education, mental health and RSE. They are used to give students space, respect and confidence to contribute and feel safe when listening to comments from others. Ideally, they should be created and led by the students.

The language used in RSE is to be open, inclusive and free from discrimination.

- ☐ E.g. partner instead of boyfriend, a relationship is non-gender or non-sexuality specific.
- ☐ Selective use of the word 'normal', as it means different things to different people.

Language that skills students up to assess risk when making decisions (How is a student going to decide what to do if a situation presents its self?) rather than catastrophe style language.

Where students have SEN needs that would significantly impair their ability to participate in PSHE lessons then separate provision will be made through conversation with parents, the student support centre (A01), the DSL and SENCO.

Where students ask questions which relate to topics or content that is taught to a higher age group then staff will endeavour to answer the questions in an age appropriate manner, together with providing information about how to contact the school nurse or another appropriate service such as The Zone and follow all necessary safeguarding procedures.

8. Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that RSE can bring about an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Teachers will consult with the DSL, and in their absence, a deputy DSL and log any concerns as per the schools safeguarding procedure.

Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to sign in and the safeguarding procedures will be explained including giving the name of the DSL. Where there are any safeguarding issues, the visitor should report these to the member of staff or the DSL.

Where we are aware that there are students who are vulnerable or at risk we will consult with them about the topics, content, resources and possible scenarios in lessons, students are given the option to withdraw and the teacher will set alternative work. Where necessary the teacher will liaise with parents or carers to ensure content is not missed.

9. Engaging stakeholders

Parents will be informed about the policy through the yearly RSE information letter available on the website and signposted in communications home. The policy will be available to parents through the school website. We are committed to working with parents and carers by consulting with them on policy review and when any significant changes need to be made. We work with parents to ensure that they are fully aware of what is being taught and provide additional resources and support when requested. As part of our whole school approach to RSE, Parent Information sessions and opportunities for parents to view the materials and resources used can be offered. Parents can find the PSHE schedule for the academic year on the school website. Parents wishing to discuss the curriculum or content of PSHE should contact the Head of PSHE in the first instance.

10. Monitoring, assessment, reporting and evaluation.

The effectiveness of the RSE programme is reviewed through PSHE quality assurance. Students will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons and working groups and feedback to the HOD of PSHE and Citizenship. Student voice is also used to allow students to contribute to the planning and organisation of their RSE curriculum.

RSE is assessed through the PSHE department assessment system using the reflection tool to reflect on knowledge and skills. The self-assessment informs teacher assessment which is reported on at the appropriate data entry point.

11. RSE policy review date

This policy will be reviewed in February 2024. It will be reviewed by the HOD of PSHE and Citizenship in conjunction with the headteacher and link governor. This will ensure quality assurance, statutory compliance and up to date planning.