



# **Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy (RSHE)**

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## **1.Introduction**

At Mayfield School we aim to educate the whole child and to ensure all children are happy, healthy and fulfil their potential in terms of the development of skills for life, social and moral values and academic success. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education is a fundamental part of our Personal Development Curriculum and aims to promote self-respect, confidence, responsibility and respect towards others as well as resilience, safety, empathy, love and care.

## **2.What is Relationships and Sex Education**

Relationships and Sex Education relates to learning about physical, moral and emotional development, understanding the importance of family life as well as of stable and loving relationships, and promoting British values such as tolerance. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes and supports young people in developing self-confidence in preparing for physical and emotional changes into adulthood. RSHE has an integral part to play in building pupils' mental wellbeing and their understanding of themselves as part of a family, community and wider society. As our pupils grow, they will understand their rights as global citizens but also the responsibility that this brings.

Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive RSHE does not make young people more likely to become sexually active at a younger age and in fact knowledge can help prevent this as well as help to identify child protection issues in young children. Relationships education is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity as this would be inappropriate teaching. Young people's entitlement to RSE is enshrined in the terms of the Education Act (1996).

## **3.Aims and Objectives**

The policy has been developed to ensure that staff and parents or carers are clear about the statutory requirements regarding Relationships, Sex and Health Education including its content, progression and delivery, and that the pupils receive their educational entitlement. It is our intention that all children have the opportunity to experience a bespoke and relevant programme of Relationships, Sex and Health Education at a level which is appropriate for their age, cognitive, developmental and physical development with differentiated provision as required. Taking account of the age, maturity and needs of the pupils, Relationships, Sex and Health Education aims:

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled.
- To help pupils recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent; to understand how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships.
- To ensure pupils learn about how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health.
- To provide the confidence for pupils to be active participating members of society and to value themselves and others.
- To prepare pupils for puberty and adulthood and encourage them to take responsibility for their own actions.

- To equip pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy, responsible choices about their health and wellbeing including personal hygiene.
- To equip pupils with the knowledge and understanding of how to respect and care for their bodies.
- To help pupils understand the significance of marriage and stable relationships and its importance for family life. **Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.**
- To promote pupil understanding of reproduction and sexual development.
- To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework.
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media.
- To answer pupils' questions honestly and sensitively referring the children to parents where appropriate.
- To give pupils information on where individuals and families can get help and support.
- To help pupils to understand issues of media influence and mixed messages that may contradict and conflict with own beliefs, etc.
- **To promote the school's Careers Education offer.**

#### 4. Statutory Guidance

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. The regulations also make Health Education compulsory in all state funded schools.

This policy was developed with regard to the

- Statutory guidance on RSE and Health Education.
- Keeping Children safe in Education: for Schools and Colleges (Statutory Guidance).
- Behaviour and Discipline in schools: Guidance for Headteachers and Staff.
- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Alternative provision.
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools.
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying.
- Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff.
- Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyber Bullying.
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges.
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in Schools.
- National Citizen Service: Guidance for Schools and Colleges.

## 5. Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies and School guidance documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Communication Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Personal Development Framework
- SMSC Guidance

## 6. RSHE Curriculum Design and Planning

Relationships and Sex Education is the multi layered acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of ourselves, our bodies and our relationships. It is taught using content and materials that consider the developmental, cognitive and chronological age of the pupils. Mayfield School delivers the RSHE offer as informed by statutory content set out in the RSE and Health Education Guidance 2019 (please refer to **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2**), however in the context of a broad, differentiated, balanced and sequential curriculum (Get Real Curriculum) tailored to the needs of the school population. Effective teaching will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way within a planned programme of lessons.

Teaching will include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to practise applying and embedding new knowledge so that it can be used skilfully and confidently in real life situations. When appropriate, students will follow a structured, graduated and age-appropriate programme to increase their understanding of aspects of puberty, health and sexual relationships. Although identified progressive curriculum topics are in place, yet the sequence in which learning units are being taught may be changed to reflect the specific needs of student cohorts or individual student needs.

As part of the Get Real Curriculum -which incorporates our RSHE offer- we focus on helping pupils develop an understanding of themselves, form good relationships and respect the differences between people. We also aim to prepare pupils for any physical and emotional changes during puberty, which some will begin to experience before they reach secondary age. Further curriculum content includes learning units for example on building relationships, self-awareness, body awareness, people we trust, secrets and surprises, recognising privacy, staying safe, seeking permission, managing friendships, understanding how behaviour affects others, keeping safe online, keeping healthy etc.

At later stages of the curriculum offer we aim to inform our students on topics such as intimate and other committed relationships, mental and physical health and prevention,

being safe, respectful relationships and abuse, employment rights and responsibilities, evaluating media sources, managing change, loss and bereavement, etc.

For a detailed account of the sequential order of topics covered across our curriculum please refer to the Mayfield **School Personal, Social, Health and Economics (PSHE)** Long Term Curriculum Overview (Appendix 4). Part of our RSHE Content is also being met via the Physical Development Curriculum Overview and relevant curriculum strand. Detailed Get Real Curriculum strand information may be offered upon request to the school.

## 7. RSHE Delivery

Mayfield School acknowledges that high-quality, evidence-based and developmentally appropriate teaching can help pupils prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils both at school and in society.

At Mayfield, we teach Relationships, Sex and Health Education in the context of the school's aims, ethos and values framework promoting respect for self and others, responsibility for own actions as well as for family, friends, school and community. Whilst Relationships and Sex Education in our school means that we give children information about the way relationships develop and grow over time from childhood through to adult relationships, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all work in school. Mayfield school is aware of the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND Code of Practice and ensures that RSE teaching is differentiated, personalised and delivered in a relevant and accessible way.

RSHE content is taught by teachers across identified curriculum strands (i.e., Physical Development and Wellbeing, Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) as well as Functional Skills/Science) and through a sequence of identified milestones. **All Secondary aged children have a discrete RSE lessons every week alongside their PSHE lesson. This allows the children to really focus on RSE as a separate area of the curriculum.** Since Relationships and Sex Education incorporates the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and relationships, pupils' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum, but through all aspects of school life. Where appropriate, outside visitors and professionals may be invited to further enrich the RSHE curriculum through direct classroom input or in the context of Personal Development Day activities.

RSHE is set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. RSHE also sits within the context of the school's broader philosophy and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually, and culturally and its pastoral care system. Relationship, Sex and Health education is usually delivered in mixed gender groups, however there may be occasions where single gender groups are more appropriate and relevant.

When delivering RSHE topics, teachers will set a group agreement (Ground Rules) with pupils to ensure that an atmosphere is created where pupils feel able to discuss concerns, feelings, and relationships. It should be recognised that questions from pupils will be addressed and dealt with in the most appropriate manner and not disregarded.

To support the delivery of RSHE related outcomes a variety of teaching and learning styles may be used including videos, information sheets, pamphlets, textbooks, visual aids and models, games, role-play, accessing appropriate material in the internet and visits. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions. It is important that all staff understand that they have a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are working with children.

All staff delivering RSE receive regular training (at least annually) on statutory requirements, safe practice, and inclusive teaching. Training covers updates to DfE guidance, handling sensitive questions, and effective delivery to SEND pupils.

## **8. Answering difficult questions**

- If a pupil asks a difficult question during a whole or small group class session, staff will be expected to answer honestly and factually.
- Where possible pupils will be encouraged to use the question box approach.
- Pupils' questions will be answered according to their maturity and understanding with support from parents.
- The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to ensure both are actively involved, matching their different learning styles.
- Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of healthy relationships.
- The question box may be used as a distancing technique to prevent over exposure of concepts outside of learning objective.
- Questions answered need to follow school policy. Where curriculum queries are raised, these need to be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team and/or Designated Safeguarding Leads.

## **9. Terminology**

OFSTED guidance recommends that it is important for children to learn the language associated with body parts so that children are able to talk to health professionals. Therefore, teachers will use the anatomically correct language for body parts, while acknowledging common terms used by some people. Correct language for body parts will be gradually introduced from Year 1.

## **10. Areas of responsibility**

### **Mayfield School Local Governing Body**

The school's Local Governing Body will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Senior Leadership Team to account for its implementation.

### **Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team**

The Head Teacher with the support of the Senior Leadership Team and the school's Local Governing body will ensure that:

- All staff are informed of the policy and the responsibilities included within the policy.

- All teachers explore how new pedagogies, and technology can be fully utilised to support subjects.
- The subjects are timetabled in a way to ensure that the school fulfils its legal obligations.
- The teaching of RSHE is monitored to ensure that it is delivered in ways that are accessible to all students with SEND.
- The school closely works with parents when planning and delivering RSHE to pupils.
- Clear information is provided to parents/carers on subject content and progression and right to request that their child is withdrawn.

### **Teaching Staff**

#### **All Staff will ensure that:**

- Ground rules are negotiated with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature, so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear and embarrassment, anxiety or breach of confidentiality;
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support.
- At all times teaching will take place in the context of an explicit moral framework.
- The teaching of RSHE is delivered in ways that are accessible to all students with SEND.
- The emphasis of teaching RSHE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices.
- Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSHE.
- Pupil progress monitoring processes are followed in line with the school's teaching, learning and assessment internal systems.

### **Parents**

The school understands the primary role in children's Relationships and Sex Education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust, and co-operation. In promoting this objective all parents will be

- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.
- Consulted and encouraged to participate in the development of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.
- Able to discuss any questions or curriculum queries directly with the school.

Parents as well as any relevant stakeholders should be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of a teacher should not influence the teaching of RSHE.

Each year, Mayfield School invites parental feedback on the RSE policy and curriculum through surveys, information sessions, and parent/ carer evenings. Parental and pupil feedback is reviewed by the PSHE lead and informs curriculum updates. A summary of parental feedback and actions taken is published annually on the school website.

## **11.Sensitive Issues**

From time to time, sensitive issues will be raised by pupils. It is important that all individuals concerned with the delivery of RSHE in school are aware of the agreed values framework. The issues concerned may include contraception, abortion, safe sex, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, sexual identity or orientation, homophobic bullying and different families. It is important to acknowledge that pupils may hear these terms through different sources such as the media and need to feel able to ask for further information. The response from the member of staff will be appropriate to the child's age and maturity, and thought will be given to whether the response is appropriate in the context of a small class group or individual situation. Questions will always be treated with respect and with a caring response and staff will always be sensitive to underlying problems which may be worrying a child.

## **12.Child Protection and Confidentiality**

When teaching any sensitive topic, such as RSHE which deals with family life, safe and appropriate touching, personal body parts and healthy relationships, we recognise the potential to uncover incidents of abuse through children's disclosures. All members of staff who deliver any of our Relationship or Sex Education Programme, have statutory training around safeguarding children and are all aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern. All staff involved in delivering and supporting RSHE should be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and are aware that they cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality to the child. If there is a concern about the child's safety, staff should follow the guidelines in the Safeguarding Policy adopted by the school.

We recognise that for children who may be vulnerable due to past or present abuse or changes in family situations, some learning units may need to be adapted due to the sensitive nature of the topics covered. Providing RSHE Education is deemed to be a protective factor in preventing further abuse, as it may help children make sense of their experiences and help them develop the skills and resilience needed to keep them safe in future. Mayfield School will ensure that Schemes of Work may be adapted as appropriate to meet individual pupil needs in relation to their contextual circumstances.

## **13.Equal Opportunities**

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSHE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice –including homophobia –and will promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE,2014b). Schools have a legal duty to promote equality (Equality Act,2010) and to combat bullying (Education Act, 2006) (which includes homophobic, sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying) and Section 4.2 of the national

curriculum (2014) states "Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

#### **14. Parental Right to Withdraw**

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from some or all elements of the Sex education delivered as part of the RSHE which do not form part of the National Curriculum up to and until three terms before the age of 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 in accordance with the school's Get Real **PSHE** Curriculum Overview and relevant Get Real curriculum strands.

A child's individual developmental and cognitive needs as well as their starting points and prior knowledge of topics will be taken into consideration to enable teachers to make more effective judgements about their progression in learning, readiness to approach a topic and differentiation required.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from the RSHE curriculum and/or to further discuss any aspect of the curriculum in more detail should put their request in writing and address this to the Head Teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record and the Head Teacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. If queries are not resolved, they will be referred to the Local Governing Body and Local Authority for final decision.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from Sex Education, the class teacher will ensure that the pupil receives alternative appropriate and purposeful education which may include the child working on an alternative chosen project.

**There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.**

Please refer to **Appendix 3** for Mayfield School's **RSE withdrawal form**.

#### **15. Working with external agencies**

Mayfield School is aware that working with external partners will enhance the delivery of RSHE and will support the school to bring in specialist knowledge and implement different ways of engaging with young people. Where Mayfield School uses external agencies, **Mayfield School ensures all external providers are appropriately vetted, their content is pre-approved, and visitors are briefed on our safeguarding procedures and policy aims before working with pupils.**

Mayfield School will also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits within the planned programme and the published policy. Schools will work with external agencies to ensure that the content delivered is age and developmentally appropriate and accessible for all pupils. Any materials that are used as part of the delivery must be approved by the school in advance of the session. Mayfield School will ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with.

**16. Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy:**

- SLT, Governors and the PSHE Curriculum pathway lead will ensure that staff and parents are informed about the content, progression and delivery of the curriculum through relevant Policy information on the school website.
- The effectiveness of the RSHE Curriculum and provision will be evaluated by the Senior Leadership Team and the PSHE Curriculum Pathway lead through the school's internal teaching, learning and assessment processes.
- Pupil's development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the PHSE lead and governing body, with interim reviews following significant changes to DfE guidance.