



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

VERSION 2

Introduction

This policy has been developed in line with Department for Education guidance and the Kirklees Guidance Document for SRE (Dec 2001).

Relationship and Sexual Health Education (RSHE) is a lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about relationships and feelings, sex and sexuality (*ref Sex Ed Forum 1999*).

National Context

This policy is supported in legislation by the Learning and Skills Act (2000) and requires that young people learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the raising of children. However it also recognises that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside of marriage and that no stigma should be attached to home circumstances.

This policy requires that young people are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and religious and cultural background of the students concerned.

The sex education elements contained in the National Curriculum Science Orders are mandatory for all students and cover anatomy, puberty and biological aspects of sexual reproduction.

RSHE includes aspects of the curriculum that:

- develop a healthy and positive attitude about sex and gender issues within a clear moral framework
- help pupils understand the workings of their own bodies
- introduce and enhance the personal and social skills which children and adults need to make informed decisions
- ensure that understanding of sexual facts and issues occurs at appropriate times in the pupils' development
- ensure respect for diverse religious and cultural backgrounds

As a school we understand the importance of delivering RSHE within a moral framework and will promote:

- Honesty
- Tolerance and celebration of differences
- Care and compassion
- Respect for all
- Love and affection
- Equal opportunities
- Fairness and justice

School Context

North Huddersfield Trust School is a comprehensive school that caters for the 11-16 year old students. The school serves the communities of Fartown, Fixby, Birkby, Bradley, Deighton and Sheepridge. It is a co-educational school with approximately 700 students on role. The school community has a rich cultural diversity. Furthermore, North Huddersfield Trust School celebrates the ethnic diversity of the school and the ethnic and cultural composition of school reflects that of the wider community. It is with respect to this cultural and religious diversity that the policy has been developed.

Policy Aims

Effective relationship and sexual health education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. RSHE within the school PSHCE framework teaches young people to understand sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

The Teaching and Learning of RSHE enables students to understand difference and respect themselves and others for the purpose of preventing and removing prejudice.

It enables young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.

Students reflect on the nature and value of marriage and stable relationships as an important building block of society and of family life.

RSHE ensures students develop understanding of the value of family life, the implication of parenthood and the needs of young children and the importance of equality in relationships.

RSHE is relevant and accessible to all students within the school. It takes into consideration the students' varying religious beliefs, culture, maturity and sexual orientation, and ensures that there is gender dimension to all sex education work.

Policy Objectives

- To understand aspects of Britain's legislation regarding sexual behaviour.
- To understand the biological aspects of reproduction.

- To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various methods of family planning in terms of personal preference and social implications.
- To be able to recognise and discuss sensitive and controversial issues which involve a serious consideration of attitudes, values, beliefs and morality.
- To recognise that there are people of different sexual orientation in all communities and that their rights need to be respected.
- To understand that organisms can be transmitted in a variety of ways, in some cases, sexually.
- To be aware of the availability of statutory and voluntary organisations which offer support in human relationships (e.g. Relate) and sexual matters (e.g. C.A.S.H, Young People's Advice Centre) and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them should students wish to do so.
- To encourage unembarrassed acceptance of sexuality by providing appropriate vocabulary for all parts of the body and encouraging positive attitudes towards all body functions.
- To generate an atmosphere where questions and discussions on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- To provide constant reassurance that change is part of the life cycle, and give help in adjusting to these changes.
- To understand the value of family life and the implications of parenthood.
- To develop skills in personal relationships, for example, communication and assertiveness.
- To develop skills in decision-making and problem solving.
- To help students assert their rights, to be able to resist unwanted touch or advances and to communicate about such matters.

Methodology

The school prospectus informs parents about RSHE in the school. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from RSHE classes except from that which forms part of the national curriculum. Parents should notify the school in writing if they wish to withdraw their children from these lessons. Students may use the school library at these times.

Sex education is usually taught to mixed groups of students in the school. Teachers use a wide range of methodologies and there is an important emphasis on the development of appropriate skills such as listening and communicating effectively, assertiveness training and resisting peer pressure. Active learning involves discussions, debate, safety scenarios, surveys and problem solving.

The school recognises that sex education should not be over emphasised or sensationalised. It is part of a wider health education programme and as such teachers who know the students well teach the vast majority of the work.

Many students (and adults) feel insecure about talking about sexual matters; this must be recognised and respected. Small group work is often used as many students find this easier than full class discussion. Students should feel they have the right not to discuss a particular

issue if they feel uncomfortable with it 'right to pass'. The teacher should facilitate the group to establish very firm ground rules about what is, and what is not, acceptable.

The curriculum content of relationships and sexual health education supports the learning objectives set out in the schemes of work ensuring that the spiral curriculum revisits RSHE in each year group. RSHE is usually delivered the final term of each academic year. Ensuring that pupils are; familiar with the standards and expectations within PSHCE lessons, have learned to trust and share within the group and finally are the eldest they can be in the academic year. The Science curriculum ensures coverage of RSHE. These elements are compulsory for all pupils.

The schemes of work ensure that content and learning objectives are developmental. Special consideration is given to the differing needs of Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and in particular the transitional context. The programme also recognises that students with additional needs i.e. SEN may need more help in learning about acceptable and appropriate behaviour.

Continuous Professional Development and Training

The school is aware of the need for all those involved RSHE issues to be adequately trained and supported.

The school recognises and is committed to the professional development of its staff.

Teaching and Learning Strategies for Relationships and Sexual Health Education.

Teachers and other support staff will develop a variety of techniques to encourage the development of students' confidence in speaking about issues as well as listening and thinking about relationships and sex by:

- Establishing ground rules
- Using distancing techniques (i.e. ensuring that the subject matter is taught objectively rather than making it personal to individual students' experience)
- Dealing with unexpected questions and comments from students appropriately
- Using discussion and project learning methods and appropriate materials
- Encouraging reflection

The School, Parents/Carers and Community Links

The Head of PSHCE takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation in school. This responsibility includes liaison with the governing body, parents, the LA and appropriate agencies.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for any contact with the media. No other member of staff should speak to the media about matters covered by this policy. At all times, the Head

Teacher will ensure that if any reporting of incidents does take place, it is in the best interest of the student, his/her family and the school.

The school is strongly committed to the shared responsibility that parents/carers are key people in teaching children about Relationship and Sexual Health Education and the timings of delivery of that education.

The school works in partnership with parents and therefore informs parents of the schools Sex and Relationship Programme.

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The school has a welfare officer who runs a 'drop in centre' whereby pupils can arrange to discuss RSHE matters and an additional in house 'listening' service whereby pupils can seek out further support.

Delivery of RSHE is not the sole responsibility of the school and it recognises that the wider community has much to offer; therefore the school works closely with the school nurses to ensure students have accessibility to the community services provided.