



Strood Academy

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Academic year 2024/25

Date of issue	September 2024
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Aims

Strood Academy believes that RSE should:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Encourage every student to contribute to make our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- Be set within this wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches.
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.

Relationships and Sex Education in the Academy has 3 main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices.
- Learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, and marriage.
- Learning about the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.

Personal and Social Skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter).

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay;
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

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

Relationships and Sex Education at Strood Academy will follow the national guidance and will ensure that the programme embraces the following in a culturally sensitive way while defining Relationships and Sex education.

The school's commitment to promoting the personal and social development, health and wellbeing of its students is evident in its statement of aims and values.

RSE is linked to broader school policies and the curriculum in relevant subjects, as well as the Academy's pastoral system. In addition to this RSE is delivered to students in Years 7- 13 through our Lesson one and Wednesday lesson 5 Personal Development programme.

Science teaches about the biological facts relating to human growth, puberty and reproduction. It may also include teaching about contraception and STIs. RSE helps students to think about the different social contexts, influences and beliefs that affect personal behaviour. RSE also develops a positive vocabulary and the strategies and skills children and young people need to stay healthy and safe.

The ICT/computing curriculum teaches about online safety. For RSE, students are taught that the internet and social media are important resources for learning and information, and a great opportunity to build social networks, as well as learning about the risks and how to stay safe online.

There is also relevant learning in other subjects about the law and the views of religious and secular groups on different issues.

At Strood Academy, we recognise that children are naturally curious about growing up, how their bodies work and how humans reproduce. Their questions need to be answered honestly, using language and explanations appropriate for their age and maturity, thus avoiding unnecessary mystery, confusion, embarrassment and shame. At no point does RSE sexualise children.

Relationships and Sex education at Strood Academy addresses the questions and concerns raised by the biological facts – for example, exploring the feelings a new baby can bring, or the effect of puberty on friendships. It provides balance to sometimes distorted messages about sex and gender roles in the media, and helps protect children by explaining boundaries and safety, and developing the language and understanding needed to recognise abusive behaviour and seek help. It also helps students to develop respectful and consensual attitudes and behaviours.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils 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 – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents were sent the proposed curriculum as part of an online survey and given 7 days to respond to the curriculum plan. The online survey replaced a face-to-face consultation due to lockdown restrictions. Parents have been informed that they can come in to school to address any concerns once The Academy re-opens.
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

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.

Curriculum- Appendix 1

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils 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.

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). Students within Years 7-9 will have one lesson a week for RSE to ensure the concepts are embedded within learning.

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

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

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).

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

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

The Headteacher

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

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 components of RSE which are not taught within the Science curriculum

- 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 RSE co-ordinator.

Pupils

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

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.

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.

Monitoring arrangements

Teachers and students should be fully involved in evaluation of RSE.

The following evaluative questions will act as a guide to learning and are used regularly:

- Skills – what have we learnt to do?
- Personal attributes – what makes me who I am?
- Information - what new information have we learnt?
- Attitudes and values – what do we think, feel and believe?
- What do we need to learn next?

Feedback will be gathered in several ways and used in the planning and delivery of future lessons.

Resources

Appropriate resources have been selected that:

- conform to the legal requirements for RSE
- are appealing to the audience and age appropriate
- are appropriate to the needs of students in terms of language, images, attitude, maturity and understanding
- avoid racism, sexism, gender and homophobic stereotyping
- are factually correct and up-to-date
- encourage active and participatory learning methods

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Mike Williams Assistant Head RSE co-ordinator through:

Developing a robust scheme of work, learning walks, student and staff voice

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC	THEME DETAILS
Year 7	Healthy Eating	healthy eating the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer
	Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	The facts about legal and illegal drugs The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency Awareness of the dangers of prescribed drugs
	Changing adolescent bodies	Key facts about puberty Menstruation The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health
	Health and prevention	personal hygiene, germs (including bacteria and viruses), prevention of infection, antibiotics dental health

		<p>benefits of good oral hygiene</p> <p>The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination</p> <p>The importance of sufficient good quality sleep</p>
	Mental wellbeing	<p>How to talk about their emotions</p> <p>How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns</p> <p>Common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression)</p> <p>Importance of self awareness</p> <p>importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities</p>
Year 8	Families	<p>different types of committed, stable relationships</p> <p>How these relationships might contribute to human happiness</p> <p>What marriage and civil partnerships are, including their legal status</p> <p>Why marriage and civil partnerships are 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</p> <p>How to judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and how to seek help</p>
	Respectful relationships, including friendships	<p>The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships</p> <p>How to improve or support relationships</p> <p>How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage</p> <p>Tolerance of different beliefs</p>

		<p>Bullying</p> <p>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>
Year 9	Being safe	<p>Concepts and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM,</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>
	Basic first aid	<p>Basic treatment for common injuries</p> <p>Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR</p> <p>The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed</p>
	Physical health and fitness	<p>Association between physical activity and mental wellbeing</p> <p>Characteristics of a healthy lifestyle</p> <p>science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation</p> <p>The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco</p>
	Internet safety and harms	<p>the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online</p> <p>over-reliance on online relationships including social media</p> <p>the risks related to online gambling</p> <p>How to identify harmful behaviours online</p>

<p>Years 10 / 11</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, Consent The facts about reproductive health That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex contraceptive choices The facts around pregnancy, including miscarriage That there are choices in relation to pregnancy How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs) About the prevalence of some STIs, Treatment of STIs 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</p>
	<p>Online and media</p>	<p>Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online About online risks Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online The impact of viewing harmful content That specifically sexually explicit material (e.g. pornography) presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviour, How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</p>

