

Marden Bridge



Middle School

Believe, achieve, succeed.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2020

Introduction

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) from year 5 to year 8, and has been produced by the Life Studies Lead, through consultation with the Science Co-ordinator, the ICT Co-ordinator, the PE Co-ordinator, the North Tyneside Council Health and Wellbeing School Improvement Advisor, the Headteacher and the Governing Body. It will be reviewed in July 2023 or sooner if there are significant changes made to the subject. This policy meets statutory guidance to adopt Relationships & Sex Education which will become compulsory from 2020.

Policy and Parents

Parents will be informed about the RSE policy in a variety of ways. A physical copy of the policy will be made available to those parents wishing to view it. The policy will also be available for parents to view via the school's website.

Overall school aims and objectives

Our school's overarching aims and objectives for our pupils are:

- To provide an exciting, challenging and motivating learning environment for all pupils, showing respect for the diversity of people's backgrounds.
- To set high standards of attainment and achievement for all pupils, ensuring that similar life opportunities are available to all.
- To prepare pupils for the evolving world we live in.

How do these inform and impact RSE teaching?

The school aims to provide a programme of RSE as part of the Life Studies, ICT and the Science curriculum in school. Life Studies includes Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) along with Religious Education.

RSE is lifelong learning about sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships and sexual health. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. RSE has a key part to play in the personal, social, moral and spiritual development of young people. It begins informally in the home with parents and carers long before any formal education takes place at school. Young people's entitlement to RSE is enshrined in the terms of the Education Act (1996) and follows the advice set out in the Relationships and Sex Education Guidance, issued by the DFES in July 2019. This updates the guidance from 2000 and brings learning up to date with the statutory Relationships Education (for KS2) and Relationships and Sex Education (for KS3) to be implemented in September 2020.

Rationale

We define RSE as learning about the emotional, physical and social aspects of growing up, relationships, sex and human sexuality. It should equip the pupils with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships and to take responsibility for their own health and well-being. We believe it is important to address this area of the curriculum because in the 21st century it ensures that pupils are receiving a reliable source of information and an opportunity to explore the messages they are receiving in a safe learning environment.

Teachers of Life Studies, ICT and Science have shared responsibility for the teaching of RSE, and the use of outside speakers, where possible, will complement it. Staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils. They are in a particular position of trust (*in loco parentis*).

Personal beliefs and attitudes of staff should not influence the teaching of RSE; all those contributing to the programme are expected to work within the framework provided.

High quality RSE:

MBMS considers that high quality RSE:

- is a partnership between home and school
- ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- starts early and is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
- is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
- includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- helps pupils understand the issues of personal and internet safety, consent, violence, child sexual exploitation (CSE), forced and early marriage (which is covered in a separate policy document), and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and enjoyable fact of life
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- uses active learning methods and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated
- helps pupils understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media

- teaches pupils about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16, and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations
- promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs
-

Quality RSE teaching contributes to:

- a positive ethos and environment for learning
- safeguarding pupils, promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion
- a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice
- bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships
- helping pupils keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice
- reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying

Taught content

Taught content is approached jointly through Life Studies, PE, ICT and Science. By the end of Year 6, students will gain knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills relating to:

- Different types of families/models of marriage, introducing homosexuality, homophobic bullying and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender terminology n Y6
- Challenging stereotypes
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships including the need for good manners
- Compromise and negotiation skills
- The need for self esteem
- Safety online
- Boundaries including staying safe from abuse (FGM is introduced in Y6)
- Sources of advice
- The names and roles of organs within the human reproductive system
- An introduction to puberty, menstruation (including the names of the reproductive organs) hygiene
- Physical and emotional changes that occur at different stages of the human lifecycle including puberty and adolescence (periods and wet dreams are introduced in Year 5)

We do not cover “conception” until Y7 and there is therefore no “sex” element which would allow withdrawal of a pupil in Key Stage 2.

Pupils will be taught the Key Stage 3 Science curriculum in relation to sex and the human life cycle, including menstruation, fertilisation, the development of the foetus and childbirth. The changes in humans as they go through puberty are also covered, relating to hormones and physical changes alongside psychological effects.

By the end of Year 8, students will gain knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills relating to:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Physical health and fitness
- Body changes, hygiene and body parts
- Different types of relationships
- Friends and family
- Positive relationships
- The characteristics of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships
- Respect, love and care
- Consent
- The changes their bodies go through during puberty in the context of their emerging sexuality, and preparing for sexual relationships and parenthood.
- The dangers of exploitation and CSE, including Female Genital Mutilation are taught.
- Contraception
- Emerging sexuality
- Sex, morality and the law
- Fertility and conceiving a baby

- Unwanted pregnancy and STIs
- Inappropriate physical contact
- The issues surrounding pornography
- Body image
- Respecting our body
- Difference and diversity
- Gender identity
- E Safety
- Healthy eating
- Support services

Intended learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes of this programme of work will be that pupils will:-

- know the way a human is conceived
- be able to explain the changes that occur during puberty physically, socially and emotionally
- understand the importance of stable, loving relationships
- promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society, such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media
- understand they have a right to accurate information and to be taught where to seek advice and support if required
- understand they have a responsibility to behave appropriately and within the law, considering how their behaviour will affect those around them
- be ready to live their lives well, and with respect for those around them, in the modern world

ICT and RSE

Pupils will be taught across all year groups the importance of internet safety and the potential dangers that the internet and mobile phones can pose in this context. This will be delivered by the ICT department in conjunction with the Life Studies department. For further detail on internet safety in ICT and the safety procedures put in place by the school, e.g. filtering, see the ICT policy.

Answering student's questions

MBMS believes that pupils should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a pupil may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with pupils and by taking an approach that encourages pupils to be mature and sensible. If a teacher does not know the answer to a question they will acknowledge this and suggest that they and pupils research the answer to the question later. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers will acknowledge it and attend to it later with the pupil who asked.

A classroom box for written enquiries will be encouraged, to allow reticent or embarrassed pupils to raise concerns, and to allow teachers some consideration of whether and how to answer. If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse they will immediately follow the school's child protection procedures.

Homosexuality and homophobic bullying are discussed openly.

Causes of concern for pupils

There are occasions when a lesson can trigger emotional discomfort for a pupil because of unknown situations in their own lives. Teachers will always endeavour to let the pupils know what the learning will be for the following week. If an issue occurs, the teacher can then decide on the best course of action to meet that individual pupil's needs, ensuring that the curriculum is delivered despite any adjustments to the environment. Approaches may include:

- reassurance and giving a measure of control to the pupil
- seating the pupil just outside the door
- removing the pupil to another room and teaching the content individually later

Confidentiality

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. This should be done in the initial ground rules lesson which all PSHE teachers are required to do. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made. Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

Offering advice

Staff will provide a general education about sexual matters and issues. They will not offer individual advice, information or counselling on sexual matters and contraception. Staff should not give advice on sexual matters to a pupil if a parent has withdrawn that pupil from sex education lessons or give personal contraceptive advice to pupils under 16 for whom sexual intercourse is illegal. The teacher can, however, provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice e.g. the school nurse or their GP, but this is not to be encouraged as it is not part of the sex education programme.

Assessment

Teachers will assess pupils learning through talk and observation, as well as by considering written responses. The key objectives will be assessed where possible in line with national curriculum guidelines and recorded on the school tracking system. Each pupil will evaluate how far he/she feels he/she has met the learning objectives.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Humanities faculty leader will monitor delivery of RSE through observation and discussion with teaching staff to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision. Subject assessments will take place on a termly basis, which will include a mixture of the following:

- Self-evaluations
- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny

The Humanities faculty leader will also work regularly and consistently with the Headteacher and RSE link governor, e.g. through regular review meetings, to evaluate the effectiveness of the topics and implement any changes.

Inclusion and Differentiation

The teachers will respect each pupil's unique starting points by making sure the scheme of work is differentiated. The teachers must make sure that teaching assistants are informed in advance of the topics so that work can be adapted to suit the needs of all groups of pupils. Teachers must take into account the differing genders, disabilities, cultures, ethnicity, religion, belief and life experiences of the children they are educating.

Roles and Responsibilities - Involving Parents and Carers

The Humanities faculty leader is responsible for the writing of policy, schemes of work and selection of appropriate resources. A number of other Life Studies teachers may work under her direction on a year to year basis. The RSE policy will be available to read and staff will be available to answer any concerns a parent may have. Pupils will be encouraged to share their learning each week with Parents and we regularly include pupil work on the school twitter account. We also use this medium to signpost to a variety of useful organisations. A questionnaire was sent out to all parents in summer 2020 via google forms. 113 questionnaires were returned, the information was collated and fed into policy preparation. Following the writing of the draft version, several parents were invited to offer their views. Parents, on the whole, were very supportive of our plans.

Supporting 'At Risk' Pupils

During the teaching of RSE pupils may give cause for concern and the member of staff is responsible for informing the class teacher and/or Head of Year, or if necessary directly seeking help from the Safeguarding Team. The teacher will also consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ascertain if there are issues that the teacher should be aware of before the unit of work is commenced.

Procedures for Pupil Withdrawal from RSE

Parents may request to see the programme of study and will be encouraged to speak to the Life Studies Lead should they have any concerns about the content and delivery of RSE. A pupil cannot be withdrawn from Sex Education where this is taught in the Science National Curriculum. Pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education content in Life Studies lessons will still receive biological information but not be taught this in the context of relationships. In the instance that the right to withdrawal is exercised, parents/carers should be made aware that issues around Sex Education could arise naturally from class discussion or from discussion in the playground. At MBMS, we believe that being taught such information in a relevant, straightforward way is immeasurably better than receiving potential half truths from playground conversations. Pupils whose parents/carers exact their right to withdraw them from Sex Education will be temporarily transferred to an alternative class.

Policy written by Lynsey Jackson
September 2020