



Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy (R.S.H.E)

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GOAL: Empower students to make informed and healthy choices related to relationships, sex, and health.

1. Introduction

Relationships, Sex and Health education is an integral part of our Personal, Social and Health Education programme, an area vital to providing our students with the knowledge and skills they need in order to make healthier and safer choices. The learning that is required within Relationship and Sex Education is outlined in the PSHE Programmes of Study within Core Theme 2: Relationships, but is also a vital thread in Core Theme 1: Health and Wellbeing, and Core Theme 3: Living in the Wider World

The school's Relationship and Sex Education Programme will be embedded within the school's curriculum and will help children to respect themselves and others. The programme is tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of the students and is delivered by the PSHE teacher (RSHE Specialist) and supported by the whole staff support team.

Where applicable, and in consultation with parents/carers, additional support may be signposted in the form of outside agencies that can offer specific and targeted advice and opportunities, eg. Brooke, Healthwatch St Helens

2. Legal Framework

The Relationship 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 students receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools. Despite this, ARTS school believes that our learners should access Health Education to prepare them for adulthood.

The school's Relationships, Sex and Health Education policy is based on the DFE guidance document '**Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education** (Published 25 June 2019 and updated September 2021). This document describes the aims of Relationship and Sex Education and informs the basis of our curriculum. Appendix one gives further details about the aims.

3. Purpose and Scope

Taking DFE guidance on content into account, the RSHE programme aims to:

- To provide a secure, sensitive and caring framework where learning and discussion can take place
- To provide information which is easy to understand, relevant and appropriate for the needs, age and maturity of the students
- Encourage the use of correct vocabulary
- To foster self-worth and awareness, together with a sense of moral responsibility.
- To help the children to acquire and practise important life skills such as critical thinking, decision making, communication and assertiveness
- To ensure that sex education is available to all children regardless of gender, ability, cultural or religious background in line with the school's policy on equal opportunities
- Promote British values and the principles that underpin these
- To ensure that protected characteristics form an integral part of the teaching within RSHE

Relationship, Sex and Health Education teaching will be delivered via PSHE lessons; this will be planned in consultation with all relevant members of staff at the school to ensure that students are provided with relevant learning experiences that allows them to access the learning that is required in a way that is appropriate and non-threatening. Arrangements will be made to deliver topics in a manner that takes into consideration the very specific needs of the cohort/individual students at time of teaching

The programme is taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of students and parents/carers; always with the aim of providing students with the knowledge they need of the law in relation to Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

At ARTS, we aim to build on the knowledge and skills learners gained at their previous school. Within KS2 learners should have accessed:

- Healthy living introduction
- Living a healthy, active lifestyle
- Dental hygiene
- Germs, bacteria and viruses
- Positive relationships introduction
- Disagreeing respectfully
- Family, marriage and civil partnerships
- Positive vs negative relationships
- Online relationships: Online gaming

Our KS3 curriculum aims to build on this curriculum. However, we understand that sometimes our learners may have large gaps in their learning that need to be covered before they can access this curriculum.

Within KS3 learners will access the following topics in a manner appropriate to their needs and understanding:

- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle including mental health and self esteem
- Stress, social media and the fear of missing out (FOMO)
- Dangers of smoking, vaping and energy drinks
- Cancer prevention
- First aid
- Puberty and body development, how a baby is made
- Consent and the law including legal age
- Assertiveness and consent
- Friendship, respect and relationships including bullying
- The meaning of LGBT+, homophobia and transphobia
- Maintaining positive relationships
- Sexual health including STI, contraception, menstruation and hygiene
- Body confidence - male and female reproductive systems, self esteem, body image and online influences
- Sex within relationships, delaying, considerations and consequences
- Types of abuse - physical, emotional and neglect
- Grooming, online safety, child exploitation and online safety and cyberbullying
- Safety in gaming
- Gangs and knife crime
- Drugs, gang culture and county lines
- Prejudice, discrimination and the Equality Act
- Radicalisation and counter terrorism

Within KS4 learners will access the following topics in a manner appropriate to their needs and understanding:

- Technology and mental Health.
- Mental health, illness and self harm.
- Promoting emotional wellbeing.
- Organ and blood donation.
- Male and female cancers - self examination and screening.
- Respect, love and relationships.
- FGM and the law.
- Sexual health - STIs, contraception, fertility, bad choices.
- Pregnancy and choices.
- Social media, grooming and sexting.
- Online safety - live streaming and gaming.
- The dangers and impact of pornography, sexualisation in the media.
- Social media and self esteem.
- Gangs, county lines and drugs.
- Causes of knife crime.
- Addiction and substance abuse.
- Consent and considerations, delaying sex and responding to pressure.
- Honour based violence and forced marriage.
- Inclusion and diversity, extremism and radicalisation.

4. Implementation

Relationship and Sex Education is taught primarily in PSHE lessons; while this is the main vehicle for RSHE teaching, some aspects may require more specialist input and the PSHE lead will, in consultation with the leadership team, arrange further input within a safe space, liaising with outside agencies if applicable/appropriate and always in consultation with parents/carers. This will ensure that individual students receive more specific information or receive additional support for issues that may affect them. Some elements of RSHE may also be taught in other curriculum subjects, for example life cycles in science and physical health within PE.

The school retains the freedom to determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of students at the school. In compliance with the provision of the Equality Act, a differentiated curriculum may be required. The school has a specific duty to increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum.

Flexibility is important as it allows the provision to respond to, and meet, the needs of the students and adapt materials and programmes to ensure this requirement is met (for example in teaching about gangs or high prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections).

As many of our school cohorts have varying periods (sometimes significant gaps) of missed schooling, care will be taken to ensure that there is a baseline level of understanding before further learning takes place. Where significant levels of missed RSHE are identified, ARTS aims to provide individual input for students that will enable them to further deepen their understanding.

5. The Role of the Governors in RSHE

The Department for Education guidance makes specific requests of Governors. That is, alongside fulfilling their broader, legal obligations. Governors are required to ensure that:

- All students make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes
- RSHE is well lead, effectively managed and well planned
- At ARTS, the school Governor with responsibility for monitoring RSHE will ratify this Policy prior to the start of the academic year and will be informed of, and review any updates made.
- The PSHE lead will provide regular updates to the Governor for RSHE periodically (timescales to be agreed) on the progress and effectiveness of RSHE as it develops.

6. The Role of the Head Teacher in RSHE

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to ensure that both staff and parents/carers are informed about our Relationship and Sex Policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Head teacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

7. The Role of Parents/Carers in RSHE

The school is aware that the primary role in students' Relationship Education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents/guardians of the young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective we:

- Inform parents/carers about the school's sex and relationship education policy and practice
- Answer any questions that parents/carers may have about the sex education of their child; where concerns or questions are raised by parents, the PSHE Lead will seek to address these in the most suitable format, eg. telephone conversation or email within 3 working days.
- Take seriously any issue that parents/carers raise with teachers or members of the staff about this policy or the arrangements for RSHE in the school.

8. Right to Withdraw

If a parent/carer wishes their child to be withdrawn from Relationship and Sex Education lessons, they should discuss this with a member of the Leadership Team, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents/carers in this regard, however, Relationship and Sex Education is taught as part of the overall PSHE programme which is compulsory in independent schools.

ARTS school will respect the parents/carers' request to withdraw the student up to and until 3 terms before the student turns 16. After that point, rather than be withdrawn, if the student wishes to receive sex education, the school will make the provision. If a student is withdrawn from sex education, the school will provide the student purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

The school will keep a record of requests made under the Right to Withdraw

9. Confidentiality

Discussion will be encouraged at all times, however:

Ground rules for discussion excluding personal questioning of staff or students will be established

We shall attempt to deal with questions in a sensitive, open, frank and matter of fact way.

Questions concerning homosexuality, LGBTQ+ and sexually transmitted diseases and contraception will be answered as fully and appropriately as possible if raised (ensuring that this is within an appropriate setting at the time.)

Difficult or explicit questions do not have to be answered directly. The teacher will use their own discretion in these situations.

10. Safeguarding and Disclosure of Child Protection

ARTS school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and expects all staff, students, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers to share this commitment. A safer setting starts with safe individuals.

Relationship and Sex Education lessons are taught in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a student makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in any inappropriate or unsafe relationship or at risk of this, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. The teacher will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will deal with it as a matter of urgency. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Head teacher. All staff have an awareness of child protection procedures and will act according to this if needed. The Head teacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with the Safeguarding Team.

11. Assessment

The PSHE teacher is to ensure that all tracking and assessment for each student is regularly updated in accordance with assessment opportunities outlined in the schemes of work.

12. Equal Opportunities

students will have the opportunity to participate in Relationship and Sex Education. However, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from some of the

curriculum after discussion with the Head Teacher and if the school is notified in writing or in response to the schools Right to Withdraw letter.

Within ARTS, we are mindful that the needs of our SEN students will require us to carefully plan Relationship and Sex Education, requiring a bespoke approach to each lesson within the planned PSHE Programme. Planning will ensure that we have considered:

Accessibility and Personalisation; that all the RSHE curriculum is accessible for all students and that lessons are well-planned and differentiated.

Awareness of vulnerability: that we are aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying, coercion and other issues due to their SEND and take this into account when planning the content of lessons.

Tailored content; that we are aware that content and teaching strategies must be tailored to meet the needs of each student at different developmental stages.

13. Staff Support/Curriculum Links

The teaching of some aspects of Relationship and Sex Education within ARTS is supported by work within the Science curriculum. All planning with regard to linked topics will be shared to ensure that there is consistency of messages within the most recent DFE guidance.

14. Role of the Subject leader (Monitoring and Review of RSHE)

It is the responsibility of the PSHE subject leader to monitor the standards of students' work and the development of the Relationship and Sex Education programme supported by the Head teacher.

The leader will also:

- Lead the planning process
- Review annually the resources available and purchase any necessary equipment and books
- Set clear realistic targets for raising standards throughout the school

15. SMSC

The RSHE programme at ARTS school aims to ensure that students are also given the opportunity to develop their Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural awareness in line with DFE Advice (2014) education by:

- Enabling students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;

- Enabling students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- Encouraging students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- Enabling students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- Further developing tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- Encouraging respect for other people; and themselves
- Encouraging respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

The promotion of fundamental British values will be embedded in the teaching of Relationship and Sex Education. This will include developing:

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety; (The Prevent strategy 2011)
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence;
- An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- An acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination.

16. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

This policy has been written taking into consideration the following Articles:

Article 6 (survival and development) – Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and grow up healthy.

Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) – Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 34 (sexual exploitation) – Governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

17. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed in the light of any new guidance or statutory information.

We review the effectiveness of our policy and practices yearly through student feedback, parent feedback and staff reflection.

18. Conclusion

This Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) policy represents a commitment to providing our students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed and healthy choices throughout their lives. We recognise that the landscape of RSHE education is constantly evolving, and we are dedicated to ensuring our policy remains current and effective. Therefore, this policy will be reviewed regularly, specifically:

19. Additional info

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- Equality Act 2010
- Schools SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).

NOTE : The draft proposed government update to RSHE guidance remains a “draft”. The government has not yet announced the results of the 16 May – 11 July 2024 consultation on the draft or set out any next steps. As such, ARTS continues to set out the programme for RSHE following the statutory guidance from 2020. Our programme continues to consider the cohort, level of understanding and appropriateness of our pupils when preparing units for teaching.

Appendix 1

DFE guidance document ‘Relationships Education, Relationships, Sex and Health Education and Health Education (Published 25 June 2019 and updated September 2021) - Aims of the RSHE curriculum

“Give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.

This will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

Effective Relationship and Sex Education does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSHE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Many teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow students to raise issues anonymously.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education should provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education. Teachers should build on the foundation of Relationships Education and, as students grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, students should also be taught about family relationships, friendships and

other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. This teaching should enable students to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.

students should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They should be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing.

Building on the work begun in Primary Schools, there are many ways in which secondary schools should support the development of these attributes, for example by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

students should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All students should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships. This should be integrated appropriately into the RSHE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson.

Resources from allsortsyouth.org are available to support both staff and young people providing appropriate activities and information around LGBT+ and diversity. Staff training provided by the same organisation has been identified and will take place when it is available. These are:

- Understanding and Supporting LGBTQ+ Children & Young People
- Understanding and Supporting Trans and Gender-Exploring Children & Young People

It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSHE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that students are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Schools may choose to explore faith, or other perspectives, on some of these issues in other subjects such as Religious Education.

students should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Key aspects of the law relating to sex which should be taught include

the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, should also be addressed sensitively and clearly. Schools should address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). They should also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, students may also need support to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk. Schools should also be mindful that for students who are or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the school may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.

Internet safety should also be addressed. students should be taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This will include how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. students should have a strong understanding of how data is generated, collected, shared and used online, for example, how personal data is captured on social media or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them.

Some students are also exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.

(DFE Guidance Document Updated 21st September 2021: update to document that guidance became statutory)