



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

Rationale

At Manor Green School we believe that effective RSE is essential to enable our young people have healthy relationships, stay safe and make informed decisions about their lives. In particular, we believe that relationships and health education are a daily concern, therefore the content of the RSE programme is integrated into the PSHE curriculum and topics around relationships and health are integral to the wider curriculum in all its forms.

RSE is the lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development and at Manor Green School the emphasis includes healthy relationships, rights and responsibilities and staying safe.

Sex education, in particular, is that part of a student's education which provides knowledge about reproduction and puberty and an understanding of the nature of intimate relationships and sexuality. It is an essential element and forms part of a wider relationships' education that encourages acquisition of skills to make positive and fulfilling relationships. It also helps students examine their own, and other people's, attitudes and values to respect and empathise with others. RSE needs to be placed within a moral, social, legal, cultural, ethical and personal context.

Health education is also an essential part of our students' curriculum which includes understanding the essential elements of maintaining good physical health and mental wellbeing in modern society. In as much as they are able, students should be equipped with the skills to maintain their own physical and mental health, understand the indications of a healthy body and healthy mind and be aware of the 'what to look for' and 'how to get help' when concerns arise.

Aims

We aim to develop sex and relationship education in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum that is part of the wider framework of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Sex and relationship education will be fully integrated into the curriculum and not isolated, taken out of context, or over-emphasised in any way.

We aim to deliver RSE in a way that will help students learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying sexual activity, taking into account the level of understanding and challenges our students face. Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education makes young people less likely to enter into sexual activity and helps to prevent unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

We aim to work in partnership with parents, offering information and consultation regularly on the content and delivery of our sex and relationship education. To the best of our ability we will reflect the wishes of parents, the culture of the local community and the views of students and teachers.

We aim to help students recognise the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up children. We also aim to help them understand the importance of other strong and mutually supportive relationships. We will ensure that there is no criticism of any one form of relationship and no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

We also recognise that a range of people from the wider community, such as health professionals, can help to enhance and enrich the delivery of our programme. However, we will ensure that anyone coming into school to help deliver the programme is aware of the school's policy and abides by it.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education (2020)'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Guidelines

Teaching Methods

- Active learning methods which involve students' full participation are used and RSE takes place within normal classroom provision of mixed-sex and mixed ability classes. When appropriate, students may be placed into different groups according to their relevant needs, or into single-sex groups for gender sensitive topics.
- Teaching methods will take into account developmental differences of students and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Teachers will plan a variety of activities which will help to engage all learners and cater to their differing learning styles. We will ensure that the programme is tailored to the individual needs of students and takes into account their physical and emotional maturity. Teachers will ensure that all learners can access a curriculum relevant to their own specific needs.
- Staff will help students to develop the confidence to talk, listen and think about relationships and sex through a variety of strategies.
- Parents' personal views and understanding of their children will always be taken into account in the use of teaching methods and resources, in line with the statutory expectations published by the DfE.

RSE Provision

- The school staff will liaise closely to ensure that both PSHE and Science programmes complement each other and reinforce learning. We will set all objectives covered as part of the Science curriculum within the context of feelings, relationships and values and not simply focus on the physical aspects of reproduction.

Relationships Education and RSE content

Lower, Middle and Upper school departments at Manor Green School all include students with severe or moderate learning difficulties, as well as students with physical disabilities. To support our students understanding of relationships in general, and RSE more specifically, the teachers will differentiate the learning depending on needs and ability. For all students,

both physical and cognitive development will inform the programme of study they are given. *The following is a summative overview of topics covered in each school department. More detailed information is available within the PHSE curriculum documents.*

First School

Students within the First School start as young as 2 years old and generally carry on within the school to year 3 (8 years' old). The first school teaches using the Early Years' Foundation Stage model so the following themes are taught through Literacy, PSED and Understanding the World. Students engage in age-appropriate books and materials around the subject matter to help understand it better. Relationships' education in First School covers the following at the level of understanding of our students:

- Positive Relationships: appropriate physical contact with adults, hugs/kissing and also developing understanding around appropriate relationships with peers, such as playing 'mummies/daddies', 'boyfriends/girlfriends'.
- Stranger Danger: early understanding on what to do if approached by someone they don't know, and who they can go to for help.
- Internet Safety: how to keep themselves safe when using iPads, tablets and computers.
- Where there are specific concerns, staff will use a social story to support early puberty or relationships

Specialist Stream

The Specialist department includes students with profound and multiple or severe learning difficulties as well as students with profound autism. For many students, their self-awareness and comprehension limits their ability to understand relationships in general and RSE more specifically. For this reason, the specialist department generally follows the Towards Independence Curriculum for Middle and Upper school with teachers differentiating the learning depending on needs and ability, as with all other subjects.

Topics are bespoke to students' needs and range from different relationships, friendships and families to public and private areas of the body.

Middle School

Students within Middle School start in year 4 (age 8-9) and usually carry on within the school to year 9 (age 13-14). Middle School topics are bespoke to students' needs and cover the following areas as appropriate:

- Relationships: including friendships, families and people students can go to for support.
- How to take turns; treat others with kindness, consideration and respect
- The importance of honesty, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy
- Personal space and boundaries, showing respect, and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate contact.
- What is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.
- Puberty and menstruation

Upper School

Students within the Upper School start in year 10 (age 14-15) and may carry on within the school to the age of 19. Where applicable, classes will follow accredited units from ASDAN PSD and AQA PSE related to the topic. Topics are bespoke to students' needs and cover the following areas as appropriate:

- Relationships – including friendships, families and people students can go to for support.
- How to take turns, treat others with kindness, consideration and respect
- The importance of honesty, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy
- Personal space and boundaries, showing respect, and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate contact.
- What is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.
- Puberty and menstruation
- Characteristics of healthy relationships
- Online safety and appropriate behaviour online.
- How to recognise and report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse
- Contraception, developing intimate relationships, resisting, and not applying, pressure to have sex.
- Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.
- What is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.

Materials

Materials used at Manor Green School must be in accordance with the PSHE framework and the law. Inappropriate images should not be used, nor should explicit material not directly related to explanation. We will ensure that students are protected from teaching and materials via the internet, or on paper, which are inappropriate, having regard to the age, ability and cultural background of the students concerned.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Leadership team

The leadership within the school will monitor school practice and review the RSE Policy and Scheme of Work to ensure that:

- All staff are up to date with developments in the subject by attending INSET, workshops, support groups, accessing books and other literature, and sharing this information with colleagues.
- Expertise and subject knowledge is shared through INSET, workshops, and staff meetings so that staff can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- Resources are well developed, well organised, labelled and accessible.
- Appropriate planning, teaching methods, activities and resources are being delivered.
- Both staff and parents are informed about our RSE policy and that the policy is implemented effectively.
- External agencies are used effectively and appropriately for the school RSE programme.
- All adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and that they work within this framework.

Teaching Staff

- All teachers are committed to delivering the RSE curriculum.
- Staff are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of RSE. To this end, ground rules have been agreed to provide a common framework within which to teach and to deal with issues.
- Students will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (staff or student) should be expected to ask or answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.

- In all sex education and Science based lessons, only the correct names for body parts will be used {breast, penis, vagina, bottom}.
- Meanings of age-appropriate words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Sometimes an individual child will ask an explicit or difficult question in the school setting. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed later. Staff must use their skill and discretion in these situations and refer to the department leader or LT.
- If a question or comment raises a Child Protection concern LT should be informed so that safeguarding procedures can be followed.

Parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's 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 we will:

- work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects;
- answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child;
- support parents who are finding it difficult to accept their children's developing sexuality;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex education in the school;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- Liaise with parents so that wherever possible the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages.

Right to Withdraw

We acknowledge that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some, or all, of the topics directly related to sex education delivered within RSE up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. Where the child, at this point, is still not cognitively able to choose for themselves, we will still be guided by the parents in delivering the most appropriate content for that child. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the leader of the cluster their child is in, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in.

The government legislation does not allow parents to withdraw students from all other forms of Relationships' Education, including Health Education and Science based lessons on sexual reproduction. It is important that all students learn about relationships and understand their own health at the appropriate level for their understanding. We will make every effort to deliver that education in a way that respects the views of the students and parents and helps the students respect the views of others.

Working with Outside Agencies

We encourage other valued members of the community to work alongside and with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our RSE programme. All contributors to the RSE programme are made aware of this Policy.

Equal Opportunities

All teaching and non-teaching staff at our school are responsible for ensuring that all students, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity and social circumstances, have access to the whole curriculum and opportunities to make the greatest progress possible in all areas of the curriculum whilst in our school.

Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that RSE is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. Teachers will deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. There should be no direct promotion of sexual orientation.

We are aware that sexual orientation and what is taught in schools is an area of concern for some parents. We will work closely to reassure parents and make them aware of the content of the programme and the context in which it will be presented.

All forms of bullying are unacceptable, be it racial, as a result of a student's appearance, related to sexual orientation, or for any other reason.

Pastoral support for students

All members of staff are approachable to discuss sex and relationship issues with the children. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved in, or likely to be involved in, sexual activity then the member of staff will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of Child Protection. Teachers 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 the matter in accordance with Child Protection procedures. Any issues relating to young adults will be shared with parents as appropriate.

Staff may not offer or guarantee confidentiality to students in any matter relating to abuse, under-age sexual intercourse or pregnancy. At the same time, students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

In the case of a student disclosing possible abuse, the school's Child Protection Procedures will be used.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the school website, weekly email to parents, social networking sites and letters home;
- The School Bus Compliance Manager
- the staff handbook;
- meetings with parents;
- meetings with school staff;

Monitoring of the policy

Review of Procedure

This procedure shall be subject to an annual review and may be changed from time to time.

The Governing Board approved this policy on date: 8th July 2021

Signed: Richard Pelly, Chair of Governors
Signed: Joolz Scarlett, Headteacher