

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Policy statement:

Definition of RSE – from *Sex Education Forum*

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Howell's School takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible relationships and Sex education (RSE) to all its students as part of the school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum (PSHE) very seriously. At our school we want governors, parents and students to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both age and development of students.

This teaching is not intended to replace advice or guidance which is ideally received at home, but to supplement and broaden knowledge and understanding.

This policy is drafted by the Head of PSHE in consultation with the Principal, Deputy Principal, the School Nurse and SEND coordinator. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this policy content.

Aims of policy:

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by students in our care. This includes emphasis on good health, the value of self - esteem in making choices and judgements, the nature of healthy and consensual relationships, and knowledge about how the body works, all within a context of moral issues and values.

RSE will outline the importance of marriage and family life and the raising of children, as well as highlighting the role of marriage and other stable relationships as building blocks for community and society.

We want our students to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle and to care and respect their bodies and we provide them with the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

Links with other policies

This policy should be considered as part of several school policies relevant to learner wellbeing including:

- Anti-bullying
- Safeguarding/child protection
- **Key Documents**
- The non-statutory *personal and social education framework for 7 – 19-year-olds in Wales*

- *Sex and relationships education in schools (WAG circular number 0019/2010)*
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 2004
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2010
- The Healthy Schools Standards 2008
- Pupil Health and Wellbeing GDST Version 6 June 2017
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspection Act (2006)
- Supplementary Guidance RSE for the 21st Century (2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education -statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance.
- Education Wales 'Relationships and Sexuality Education in Schools.'

Provision:

We subscribe to the Department of Education guidance that is mandatory in England from 2020: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance*. As a school in Wales, we also follow guidance from The Welsh Assembly Government's Policy: Education Wales '*Relationships and Sexuality Education in Schools*.'

Taught PSHE has also been part of the Independent Schools Standards since 2014. We aim to provide a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum that not just fulfils, but exceeds externally set standards.

The Howell's School RSE curriculum is spiral, so that topics can be re-visited in later years. Although the topics below are listed specifically, we treat Relationships and Sex Education as part of the wider PSHE curriculum as well as other cross-curricular areas (such as Science and RS) and form times. It is also linked across the curriculum in the context of self-esteem and responsibility for the consequences of one's actions and other related matters such as avoiding negative peer pressure, risk-taking activities and bullying whilst promoting positive peer support.

The programme is delivered by PSHE teachers, Heads of Year, Form Tutors, teachers of key subjects (particularly Science and RS), the School Nurse and outside agencies.

We support equal opportunities in education, seeing it as enabling and encouraging all our students to build self-esteem through discussion and activities in a safe environment. We are equipping them with decision-making skills irrespective of gender roles and stereotyping.

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents to review this policy. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports the whole development of the child.

The main topics covered in RSE are:

- Establishing healthy relationships
- Puberty, menstruation and change
- Consent and how to communicate this to others
- Contraception
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Understanding our bodies
- Sexting
- Safer sex
- Sexual exploitation
- Sex and pornography
- Personal choices
- Bodies and body image
- Gender and sexuality

Delivery

1. Relationships and Sex Education is delivered in the context of both the whole school curriculum and the Personal, Social and Health Education programme (PSHE).

2 Learners will be supported to recognise and value different types of relationships, including families and friendships, as well as the diversity within different types of relationships, including LGBTQ+ diversity.

3. The PSHE programme is delivered by the PSHE Department, the School Nurse, and qualified outside agencies. Sensitive issues are presented in a broad, balanced way and the lessons are free from sensationalism and personal bias. They are sensitively pitched to the age and understanding of the individuals. RSE is developmentally appropriate for each learner. Classroom discussions involve trust, confidentiality, respect for privacy and sensitivity to religious beliefs.

4.The biological factual side of Relationships and Sex Education is dealt with in the KS3 Biology programme, including the care of the young child. Units are delivered by specialist subject staff in accordance with the National Curriculum guidelines.

5. In Religious Studies, the relational / emotional / moral concerns are uppermost. Discussions enable students to express their own opinions and to form their own positions whilst aiming to make them aware of the complexity of human relationships and decision-making.

6. Occasionally, in different parts of the curriculum (e.g. in English), the teaching of topics may lead to brief discussion of aspects of sexual behaviour. This does not constitute a part of the planned Relationships and Sex Education programme. Teachers will draw upon their professional judgement and common sense to deal with these class discussions.

7. The teaching of Relationships and Sex Education and the delivery of the curriculum is complementary to and supportive of the role of parents, carers, partner agencies and the local community.

We ensure that RSE is age relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our students do and meets their needs.

We ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with the school policy and guidance relating to relationships and sex education.

We ensure their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.

Terminology:

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang and everyday terms used in social situations will be discussed.

Ground rules are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and staff will use strategies to enable pupils to feel comfortable to ask questions. If controversial questions are asked, the teacher will use professional judgement about how to answer them and students will be allowed to raise anonymous questions if preferred.

We recognise that because of the nature of the subject, sensitive and controversial issues are likely to arise. These may include, for example, abortion, emerging gender identity, sexuality and sexual abuse. These are dealt with within the framework of the aims of the school and of the Relationships and Sex Education policy as a whole. Any cause for concern will be dealt with in accordance with our pastoral systems and safeguarding arrangements.

Guest speakers:

We sometimes use outside speakers to complement our teaching of this content, who are asked to work within the framework of the school's Relationship and Sex Education policy and adhere to the policy for Visiting Speakers. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons.

Disclosures

Procedures in the event of disclosure are clearly stated in the Safeguarding policy. Where a member of staff is concerned that a child protection issue has arisen, it is his/her responsibility to follow the school's policy in this matter to the letter and to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Confidentiality must be respected. If staff feel at any time that the health or wellbeing of an individual is being threatened, then the DSL must be informed. The School Nurse is available to give confidential advice to learners but should consult the DSL if it is believed that a child is at risk or underage.

Review and evaluation:

The educational and personal needs of our students develop in line with varying societal pressures and other changes. For this reason we regularly review our RSE curriculum.

September 2023