



Relationship and Sex Education Policy

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Introduction

Relationships and Sex education (RSE) is lifelong learning about healthy relationships, sex, sexuality, emotions, and sexual health. The objective of RSE is to help support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. We recognise the importance of RSE in preparing young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. RSE is taught as part of our PSHE program, and some parts of sex education are taught in science.

Intent/Aims

We believe that effective, age-appropriate education about relationships and sex can: foster positive attitudes and values of love and respect; promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. If young people can make their transition into adulthood with good information and the confidence and knowledge to understand what is happening to them, they will hopefully grow into confident and healthy adults, able to make positive choices. We recognise not only the high importance of teaching and assisting our students to understand, recognise and form healthy friendships and relationships, but also the vulnerability that our learners can have in the community when it comes to matters of sexual activity and the possibility of being exploited. As a school we educate students to understand the rights of all people to live freely within their sexual orientation and gender identity without discrimination and prepare our students to live in modern Britain. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and incorporates the protected characteristics. We believe parents and carers have a crucial role to play in their children's learning about healthy relationships and sex education. We intend that the school's RSE programme complements and supports their role. It is taught in a safe, non-judgemental and open forum, allowing the students to discuss their opinions, pre-conceptions and concerns.

Implementation

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, Cotswold Spa Hospital School ensures that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all students understand the importance of equality and respect. Cotswold Spa Hospital School ensures that we comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010. Guidance is taken from the DfE Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations (2019).

Staff teaching RSE ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to students, in a carefully sequenced way, within planned lessons. The RSE curriculum will cover topics such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, peer pressure, bullying, consent, gender and identity, sexism, parenting, child sexual exploitation, relationship break ups and safe sex. We recognise that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation and gender identity and we provide an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same sex relationships. At Cotswold Spa we teach our students about LGBTQ+, we ensure that this content is fully integrated into our programmes of study for this and other areas of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson, except when we are celebrating Pride month and LGBTQ+ history month.

Impact

We firmly believe that a meaningful PSHE curriculum - in which RSE is embedded - is the key to young people becoming confident, tolerant and well-rounded adults.

Evidence shows that good quality RSE reduces teenage pregnancy rates, increases condom use, and decreases the incidence of non-consensual sex. We ensure therefore that students with disabilities, special educational needs or are CIN/CIC receive comprehensive RSE that meets their needs.

The Law

It is important for students to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos, and other material using technology, this includes:

- Marriage/partnerships – which would always include same sex
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including ‘sexting’, youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour including online blackmail
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or ‘county lines’ drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

Support

Cotswold Spa Hospital School recognises that for students who are experiencing or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the hospital may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted staff, key workers and social workers to report problems and find support.

Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education, which is part of the RSE in PSHE, but parts are compulsory in science. However, a child will also have a right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16). Before this is granted, the head teacher would discuss this with the parents/carers. The head teacher would be happy to share the teaching materials and content so greater understanding is given. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

All young people should be entitled to high quality Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to help them learn about choice, control and consent to help them form strong and stable couple, family, social and professional relationships throughout their later lives so they can make informed choices. Withdrawing a young person from sex education lessons can have a detrimental effect on the young person. The young person that is not part of the group lesson can then feel different from their peers and will then often seek to find out the content of the sessions which may not be relayed correctly or in a safe environment. Young people will often seek information from unreliable sources when they have been unable to participate in arranged lessons - this can often be from the internet, using sites that are not appropriate.

SEN

RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all students. Therefore, Cotswold Spa Hospital School delivers high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to ensure accessibility to all students. Cotswold Spa Hospital School is aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Cotswold Spa Hospital School ensures that our teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, considerate to personal circumstances and delivered with reference to the law.

Roles and Responsibilities

Cotswold Spa Hospital School will ensure:

- Clear information is provided to parents/carers on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support
- All points of view that staff may express during the course of teaching RSE are unbiased
- The emphasis of teaching RSE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices
- If a student has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, staff will refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The RSE programme is led by Cat Woodsmith, head teacher, and will be also taught by PSHE teachers. Teachers will receive appropriate RSE training and guidance. The teaching of RSE is regularly monitored by the subject lead. Pupils are baselined and regularly assessed for progress, knowledge and understanding, with misconceptions highlighted and addressed. Pupil questionnaires are also used to gain feedback from students.

Responsibility for the RSE policy in Cotswold Spa Hospital School lies with the governing body. One representative of the governing body is part of a working group that develops and reviews the RSE policy.

Safeguarding, Reports of Abuse and Confidentiality

Keeping Children Safe in Education sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Cotswold Spa Hospital School students are aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. All staff are trained and aware of procedures if a student makes a disclosure. Please see the safeguarding policy.

Links to other policies/documents/websites

Guides for Parents/carers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>

DfE Teaching online safety in school June 2019

DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance