

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Summary

Woodham Academy is committed to ensuring that all students are able to achieve their potential, within an ethos of unconditional mutual respect as reflected in our school mission “Achievement for All”.

We know that high quality learning experiences for students are our core business. We recognise that good teaching which stimulates interest and engages students, which allows all students to make at least good progress, and which leads ultimately to successful outcomes is the foundation of these high quality learning experiences.

This relationships and sex education (RSE) policy acknowledges the inter-related aspects of planning, assessment, marking, the use of data and reporting, in addition to good practice in key teaching methods. This policy has been written in consultation with the following guidance:

- Life lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools: Fifth report (House of Commons Education Committee 2015)
- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfE 0116/2000)
- QCA PSHE Curriculum Framework for Schools 2000
- National Curriculum 2000 Statutory Science
- National Healthy Schools Standards 2006
- Ofsted (2002) *Sex and Relationships*. Office for Standards in Education, London
- Equalities act 2010
- Not yet good enough – personal, social health education on schools (Ofsted 2013)
- It has been developed in line and linked to Safeguarding, E-safety, Anti-bullying and Equality policies

Date adopted November 2013

Last review date October 2016

Review date Bi-Annually

1. Rationale

Woodham Academy relationships and sex education programme has three main parts: achievement, student well-being and operational effectiveness. This is what we hope to achieve for our students’ personal growth and development.

We aim to give students self-knowledge, to aim to produce self-reflective, confident and articulate young people at ease in the world. We work to make our community safe and

welcoming, happy and supportive. We offer education to meet each student's needs and give opportunities for leadership and active citizenship. We share a common commitment to safeguard and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Students should have an ethic of hard work, public service and global citizenship. We want to be central to the life of the local community.

Young people learn about sex and relationships from a very young age. Some of the things they learn are incorrect, confusing and frightening. In a world where sex is used to advertise goods and services and celebrities lives become everyone's business, we should talk to young people to help them to make sense of it all.

In addition, rates of teenage pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infection in the UK are among the highest of all European countries. The Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to change this situation and RSE for students in both primary and secondary schools is seen, alongside other initiatives, as a key element. Our schools approach to RSE is in line with the Government's strategy and guidance given to school's in DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' 2000.

The DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' (2000) recommends that 'Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives'. The school has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing RSE.

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

'Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to enter into sexual activity. Indeed it can help them learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying such activity'. Dfes 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000.

2. What is RSE?

The term relationships and sex education education – RSE – is used in this policy rather than sex education. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information, to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships. According to the latest DfE guidance RSE is: '...lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health'

DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000

3. Aims

The RSE programme reflects the school ethos and demonstrates the following values:

- Respecting self
- Respecting others
- Responsibility for own actions
- Responsibility for others

In addition, Woodham Academy believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process.
- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Encourage every student to contribute.
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and caring for each other.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents, carers and students, consulting them about the content of programmes.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with other health and education professionals.

The RSE has three main elements:

1. Attitudes and values
2. Personal and social skills
3. Knowledge and understanding

A fuller account of what exactly constitutes each of the above elements can be found in *appendix one*.

The overall aims of the Relationships and Sex Education programme are to provide balanced, factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- Dispel myths.
- Explore a range of attitudes towards RSE issues and reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle. They will develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behavior; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- Develop respect and care for others.
- Develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others.
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
- Develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and the reasons for not having unprotected sex.

- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections.
- Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- Know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

4. Content

The programme we follow at Woodham Academy is based on national guidelines provided by the DfE and is sensitive to the age and experience of our students. It is delivered mainly through the Science curriculum and Citizenship and PSHE/events, as well as informally through other subject areas and the ethos of the school.

5. Delivery

As well as a whole school approach to RSE (*see appendix three*), RSE is also part of our National Curriculum Science Programme. Other aspects are delivered mainly via PSHE/events and Citizenship/events but may also occur in other subject areas, such as RE. RSE is taught mainly via:

1. Year 7 Woodham Learning lessons: relationships and healthy lifestyles units.
2. Year 8 and 9 Healthy Lifestyles events: relationships, feelings STIs and contraception
3. Key stage three Citizenship units looking at relationships, rights, responsibilities, morals and values.
4. Key stage three Science
5. Year 10 Healthy Lifestyles events: relationships, equality, domestic abuse and mental health.
6. Informally through other lessons dealing with relationships, sex and relationship issues and through the ethos of the school.

RSE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The school's approach to RSE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias. We shall endeavour to have an approach that is educational, rather than one based on propaganda.

The PSHE and Citizenship RSE is taught in the context of relationships using a variety of formal and informal strategies and opportunities. This helps all young people to develop their self-esteem and emotional well-being, thus helping them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, which are based upon respect for themselves and for others.

6. Methodology and resources

Teaching will be based on an understanding that a variety of interactive and participatory teaching methods will be used to ensure all students are fully involved

7. Staff training

The Healthy Lifestyles events at Woodham Academy are delivered by trained professionals who look at a range of issues with the students. All of these staff are provided with appropriate training and support to help them deliver effective Relationships and Sex Education and respond to situations with consistency and sensitivity, taking account of religious, social and cultural issues. Within school there is a specially trained RSE team of teaching staff to deliver

sections of the whole school programme to relevant year groups Staff receive on-going training and this is reviewed annually.

8. Outside agencies

Outside agencies are used to complement the RSE programme following the guidelines for working with visitors in schools.

9. Partnership with parents/carers and the right to withdraw

Most of a student's informal relationships and sex education occurs within the family and the school's programme will complement and build on this. We will share responsibility for the education of students, with parents, who will be kept informed via sharing of the RSE policy and pre event written communication.

Some parents prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'relationships and sex education' event, except from those aspects of RSE that are taught in National Curriculum Science or where RSE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas.

Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with staff at the earliest opportunity and are welcome to review any RSE resources the school may use. We send parents a letter outlining the RSE group sessions before any given event and give parents the opportunity to withdraw their child. If a child is withdrawn appropriate educational provision will be in place including social skills groups.

10. Confidentiality and safeguarding

The school takes its role in the promotion of student welfare seriously. Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for students in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through the tutorial/ pastoral system. They offer a listening ear and, where appropriate, information and advice. The school nurse offers a health and support service to students.

Where appropriate, students are referred to the school nurse and/or outside helping agencies. The school will keep up to date about the development of local services and national help lines for young people promote their existence to students and endeavour to form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to student needs.

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made.

It is very rare for a student to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the student may be experiencing.
- The student's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a student would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the student to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third

party together with the student. Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

Young people under the age of 13:

A child under 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sexual activity. Any offence under The Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving a child under 13 is very serious and should be taken to indicate a risk of significant harm to the child. Cases involving under 13s should always be discussed with the school's nominated child protection lead.

Under the Sexual Offences Act, penetrative sex with a child under the age of 13 is classed as rape. Therefore, in all cases where the sexually active young person is under 13, a referral should be made to Social Care Direct identifying the young person, and the sexual partner if known. Following this, a Strategy Meeting or discussion will be held. The meeting will involve a Team Manager, Social Worker, Police, Health Worker, Education and Welfare and other relevant agencies, to discuss appropriate next steps.

Where the allegation concerns penetrative sex, or other intimate sexual activity occurs, there would always be reasonable cause to suspect that a child, whether girl or boy, is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. All cases involving under 13s should be fully documented including detailed reasons why decisions were made not to share information.

Young people between 13 – 16

Sexual Activity with a young person in this age group is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The Act reinforces that whilst mutually agreed, non exploitive sexual activity between teenagers does take place and that often no harm comes from it, the legal age of consent remains 16. This acknowledges that this group of young people is still vulnerable, even when they do not view themselves as such.

Consideration should be given in every case of sexual activity involving 13-15 as to whether a discussion with other agencies and whether a referral should be made to Safeguarding and Specialist Services. Cases of concern should be discussed with the nominated child protection lead and subsequently with other agencies as required.

When confidentiality needs to be preserved a discussion can still take place as long as it does not identify the child (directly or indirectly).

Where there is a reasonable cause to suspect that significant harm to a child has occurred/might occur, there should be a presumption that the case is reported to Safeguarding and Specialist Service .

All cases should be carefully documented including when a decision is taken not to share information.

Sexting guidance

New guidelines will be followed which advise teachers on when an incident of sexting should be reported to the police. Incidents involving children being bullied or blackmailed would be considered as a more serious case and where the police may become involved.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct but have a duty to share information with relevant others, if they believe that a child is suffering abuse.

Frazer Guidelines - It is good practice for doctors and other health professionals to follow the criteria outlined by Lord Fraser in 1985, “The House of Lords” ruling commonly known as the Fraser Guidelines.

- The young person understands the health professional’s advice.
- The health professional cannot persuade the young person to inform his or her parents or allow the doctor to inform the parents that he or she is seeking contraceptive treatment;
- The young person is very likely to begin or continue having intercourse with or without contraceptive treatment;
- Unless he or she receives contraceptive advice or treatment, the young person’s physical or mental health or both are likely to suffer;
- The young person’s best interests require the health professionals to give contraceptive advice, treatment or both without parental consent.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Durham LSCB protection procedures ([link](#)) with special reference to Sections 3 ‘Referral and Investigation’ and Section 6.13 ‘Sexually Active Children under 18

11. Monitoring and evaluation of RSE

It is the responsibility of the team leader of Citizenship/PSHE to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

Appendix 1 – Additional information

The three main elements:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Learning and understanding physical and emotional development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and a range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.
- Learning and understanding active consent

Attitudes and values:

- Learning and developing self-respect in relation to sexting and general e-safety
- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.
Exploring sex in different cultures including FGM

Personal and social skills:

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- To understand the meaning and implication of FGM

Appendix 2 -Inclusion

‘Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in sex and relationships education. Sex and relationship education should help all students understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives’.

DfE RSE Guidance July 2000

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the school’s approach to RSE will take account of:

The needs of boys as well as girls: Girls tend to have greater access to RSE than boys, both through the media (particularly teenage magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

Ethnic and cultural diversity: Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns regarding this.

Varying home backgrounds: We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

Sexuality: On average, about 5% of our students will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. Students may also have LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with LGBT people. Our pastoral support will take account of the needs of LGBT students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic name-calling and bullying.

We aim to deal sensitively with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that RSE is relevant to them.

Special educational needs: We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RSE needs.

Appendix 3 -A whole school approach

A whole school approach will be adapted to RSE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding RSE. In particular:

- **The leadership group (LG)** will endeavour to support the provision and development of RSE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.
- **The designated PSHE/Citizenship co-coordinator** will maintain an overview of RSE provision and will evaluate this on an annual basis.
- **All teachers** are involved in the school's RSE provision in one way or another. Some teach RSE through the PSHE programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues. Teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to RSE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and if requested, access to appropriate training.
- **Non-teaching staff** may be involved in a supportive role in some RSE lessons/events and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students. They will have access to information about the RSE programme and supported in their pastoral role.
- **Governors** have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the RSE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governor's meetings.
- **Parents/carers** have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's RSE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated RSE lessons if they wish. The school will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers.
- **The school nurse** can play a key role in supporting the school in RSE both in terms of advice, input into lessons, provision of pastoral support for students and resources. The school will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the school nurse.
- **Outside agencies and speakers** may be involved in inputting to RSE lessons/events and as points of referral as support services for students. The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. The school will also promote relevant helping agencies that students can access.
- **Students** have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate RSE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their RSE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.