

## Education

# Relationship and Sex Education Policy

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### Revision Log (last 5 changes)

Date	Version No	Brief detail of change
01/20	1	Additional detail added

## 1. Definitions and Context

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Snowfields Academy comprises of two specialist colleges, both designed to accommodate students between the ages of 11 and 18 whose primary need is ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder). Snowfields Academy offers the very best personalised approaches within an inspiring learning environment. The students are taught and supported by exceptional staff who offer care, challenge and support. The academy is an inclusive provision where students access all areas of the curriculum, including PSHE.

## 2. Statutory RSE Guidance

“The Relationships 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 and Sex Education compulsory for all pupils 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.”

DfE Guidance p.8.

Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum and as such, are not obliged to teach RSE. However Snowfields Academy feels it is in the best interest of the students to follow the statutory guidance to allow them to gain a full understanding in preparation for their adult lives.

Our RSE policy is informed by existing DfE guidance:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (statutory guidance)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools
- Multi-agency practice guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation (2014)

## 3. Aims

**The aim of RSE is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships, and to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing.**

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by students if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Effective RSE is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It helps support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. It helps young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

**Addressing Relationships and Sex Education has three main elements enabling pupils to:**

- Explore their own and other peoples' attitudes and values.
- Develop and practice personal and social skills.
- Increase their knowledge and skills.

The Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school and we uphold it as an entitlement for all our pupils. We recognise the need to work as a whole school community to ensure a shared understanding of RSE and the under-pinning values and to deliver an effective programme that meets the needs of our pupils.

**Snowfields Academy explores/teaches RSE within the following moral and values framework based on the following principles:**

- Respect and tolerance towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, feelings, views and sexuality.
- The right of people to hold their views within the boundaries of respect for the rights of others.
- The acceptance of the responsibility for and the consequences of personal actions.
- The right not to be abused by or taken advantage of by other people.
- The right to accurate information about relationships.
- An awareness of the way another person feels.
- The value of stable loving relationship.
- Mutual support and co-operation.
- Honesty and openness.
- Self-respect.

#### **4. RSE across the whole school community**

At Snowfields Academy we are mindful of the various starting points and baseline understandings of our students following varied experiences at primary school. We are mindful that although RSE guidance is in place for primary schools, due to level of need and the impact of covid not all areas might have been covered.

Our RSE curriculum is taught primarily through our PSHE lessons through Jigsaw. [Jigsaw](#), the mindful approach to PSHE, provides a programme which offers us a comprehensive, carefully thought-through Scheme of Work bringing consistency and progression to our students' learning in this vital curriculum area. The overview of the programme can be seen on the school website.

This also supports the "Personal Development" and "Behaviour and Attitude" aspects required under the Ofsted Inspection Framework, as well as significantly contributing to the school's Safeguarding and Equality Duties, the Government's British Values agenda and the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) development opportunities provided for our young people.

Snowfields Academy also runs an Anti-Bullying Alliance, a group who work on academy initiatives to promote kindness in line with the academy Core Values of Work Hard, Be Kind, Communicate, Stay Safe and Be Happy.

Snowfields Academy will follow best practice by ensuring that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of RSE lessons.

**How and to whom will the policy be shared and consulted:**

Dissemination and consultation/review of policy includes:

- Consultation with wider school community.
- Review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils.
- Pupil focus groups or school council.
- Consultation with school governors.
- Questionnaires to parents/carers.

The policy will be available to parents through direct request and available on the website.

**Working with parents and carers and the wider community:**

Parents and carers have an especially important role to play in supporting PSHE/RSE education.

Snowfields Academy is confident that the school's programme complements RSE across the school. To enable this, an information session for parents is offered to discuss the RSE programme. Teaching resources can be shown and opportunities given for discussion and questions.

Before any year group embarks upon its RSE programme, parents/carers are informed by letter of their right to withdraw their child from RSE lessons and given an overview of the topics the child will be covering.

Parents/carers are also reminded that they can have a copy of the school's RSE Policy on request and that they can view any teaching resources being used in the delivery of RSE.

*Copy of Parental Letter in Appendix 1*

## **5. Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum through the use of Jigsaw. PSHE sits as part of the SPHERE (social, personal, health, emotional, relationships and employment) Faculty and the delivery of RSE is complemented by topics covered in Life Skills, Communication and Vocational/Occupational Studies. As well as being covered within students' Wellbeing Time and as part of the core values.

*Overview of the spiral nature of the Jigsaw PSHE curriculum can be seen in appendix 2.*

Well-sequenced unit plans are used at Snowfields Academy to ensure knowledge and understanding are developed through scaffolded and adapted lessons to meet the needs of the students. Students' knowledge and understanding are assessed using self-assessment and teacher live assessment using the academy's Marking, Feedback and Assessment Policy. The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team through lesson observations and learning walks.

The academy also signs up for the Primary programme on Jigsaw to help close any gaps in understanding due to different starting points that the students may have.

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. Young People should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- Marriage
- 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.)
- 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)

## **6. Specific Issues including Vulnerable Groups**

**What kind of language will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in RSE lessons?**

All staff will:

- Use inclusive language (such as partner instead of boyfriend/girlfriend).
- Use correct terminology as this is deemed good practice.
- Avoid the use of any slang.

It is good practice to use medically correct terms for genitalia and sexual parts of the body, for example vulva, vagina, penis and testicles. Ofsted provides full support for this approach (2013) and have raised concerns that some schools are currently failing to teach this vocabulary because this leaves children unable to describe abusive behaviours.

The use of respectful language which challenges sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice can be established in RSE and will have benefits for the whole school community – both in and out of lessons. Ofsted found that casual use of homophobic language in schools is often unchallenged (2013). Snowfields Academy educates and challenges students regarding protected characteristics through the curriculum and pastoral offer. Children of primary and secondary level need to know that using the word 'gay', to mean something is rubbish is wrong. See also 'The LGBT Issue' e-magazine for inclusive RSE and challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (Sex Education Forum, 2014). The curriculum is designed to be fully inclusive for our students who identify as LGBTQ+.

### **Safeguarding**

Some issues may result in children and young people making disclosures which will be addressed in line with school safeguarding policy and procedures.

RSE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. SRE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. State-funded schools have responsibilities for safeguarding and a legal duty to promote pupil well-being (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 38).

### **Confidentiality:**

Staff will follow school's policy with regard to confidentiality. Pupils should also be made aware of the boundaries of confidentiality should they choose to make a disclosure to a member of staff.

A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns exist.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **The governing board**

The governing board has delegated the approval of this policy to the Principal.

### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE (see section 8).

### **Staff**

The PSHE Co-ordinator and Personal Development team, including the link SLT members are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the nonstatutory/non-science components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal.

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

## **8. Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Principal. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RSE.

## **9. Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar, including Jigsaw PSHE training.

The Principal will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Surveys of all staff are taken regularly in regards to their training needs and TA training is provided as part of the academy CPD calendar.

## **10. Links to other policies**

Links to other policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Child Protection Safeguarding Policy
- Internet Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

## **11. Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Principal.

## Appendix 1 - Example of Parental Letter

Dear Parents and Carers,

As a part of your child's education at Snowfields Academy, we promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme. PSHE education is the curriculum subject that gives young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, healthy, productive lives and meet their full potential.

I am writing to let you know that, over the next 5 weeks, starting Monday 28th February 2022, your child's class will be taking part in lessons which will focus on the relationships and sex education (RSE) aspect of this programme. A variety of opportunities will be provided for students to ask questions that help prepare them for relationships of all kinds in the modern world. You may access the school's RSE Policy via the school website:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DmdMQc4JHereAsnOXkin5iMq3grUMwce/view>.

RSE lessons in Year 9 will include teaching about:

- Gender and Sexuality
- Consent
- Sexting/Grooming
- Sexual Health (including STIs and contraception)
- When are you ready to have sex

The new government statutory requirements have made the teaching of Relationship and Sex education compulsory in primary and secondary schools across the country. However, parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from aspects of sex education within PSHE up to 3 terms prior to their child's 16th birthday. If you wish to exercise this right, please contact us as soon as possible.

PSHE education is taught throughout the school in every year group and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the staff and governing body. All PSHE teaching takes place in a safe learning environment and is underpinned by our school ethos and values.

As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents. If you would like to find out more or discuss any concerns, please get in touch via the email below.

Yours sincerely,



## Appendix 2 - Whole-school approach

The Jigsaw Programme covers all areas of PSHE for the secondary phase including statutory RSE and Health Education. The table below gives the learning theme of each of the six Puzzles (units) and these are taught across the school; the learning deepens and broadens every year.

Term	Puzzle (Unit)	Content
<b>Autumn 1:</b>	Being Me in My World	Includes understanding my own identity and how I fit well in the class, school and global community. Jigsaw Charter established.
<b>Autumn 2:</b>	Celebrating Difference	Includes anti-bullying (cyber and homophobic bullying included) and understanding difference, Equality Act
<b>Spring 1:</b>	Dreams and Goals	Includes goal-setting, aspirations, who do I want to become and what would I like to do for work and to contribute to society
<b>Spring 2:</b>	Healthy Me	Includes drugs and alcohol education, self-esteem and confidence as well as healthy lifestyle choices, sleep, nutrition, rest and exercise
<b>Summer 1:</b>	Relationships	Includes understanding friendship, family, intimate relationships and other relationships, conflict resolution and communication skills, bereavement and loss
<b>Summer 2:</b>	Changing Me	Includes Relationships and Sex Education in the context of coping positively with change