

Easthampstead Park Community School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy



Introduction

Although EPCS has always included elements of relationship and sex education (RSE) within the PSHE programme, the law now requires that all pupils in secondary education be taught RSE from September 2020. Recent statutory guidance sets out the required RSE content while giving schools the freedom to deliver that content within a broad and balanced curriculum.

This RSE policy has been drawn up with reference to the equality act 2010 and Relationships Education. It is also informed by the statutory guidance referred to by the PSHE association guidance as well as statutory guidance such as the Equality act and *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. It should be read in conjunction with the school policies listed below. The overwhelming majority of the information was already within the PSHE curriculum. Parents were nonetheless advised of the introduction of the new guidance through letters, social media and were invited to contribute their views and opinion about any aspects of its delivery following a recorded information video from the PSHE lead.

Rational and Ethos

At EPCS we see RSE as one part of a lifelong process of learning about relationships, emotions, sex, sexuality and sexual health. Acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

Our aim in RSE is to give students the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Our teaching of RSE should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. We aim to teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships, to help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how situations can be managed.

Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It aims to teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It should enable young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and support them to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships at the appropriate time. We aim to impart knowledge about safer sex and sexual health to ensure our students are equipped to make safe informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This will be delivered in a non-judgmental factual way, and allow scope for students to ask questions in a safe environment.

Through our PSHE programme we aim to foster the personal, moral, spiritual, social and cultural development of our students, as well as helping to enhance their ability to cope with life and its demands. We aim to inspire and encourage our students to be kinder, more confident, more thoughtful and more respectful citizens in the community in which they live and work.

Responsibilities

RSE will be delivered primarily by form tutors, selected safeguarding staff with professional experience in delivering this content. A significant amount of RSE content is taught by the Science department as part of the Science curriculum and the School may also invite in appropriate experts to teach specific topics within the RSE programme.

We recognise that parents/carers play a key role in teaching their children about relationships and sex. The school aims to work with partners and carers to support them in preparing their children for happy and fulfilled relationships in adult life.

Curriculum design

We have chosen to deliver RSE mainly as part of the timetabled PSHE programme, some of the elements will also be taught within the Science curriculum. RSE will also be supplemented with various extracurricular activities and some topics are covered in the assembly programme.

Equality

Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as protected characteristics)

Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

RSE must be available for all students and high-quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. The school will refer to the SEND code of practice where appropriate and will also be aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their send. RSE can be particularly important for those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities, and such factors will be taken into consideration when designing the curriculum.

Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

In teaching RSE, we will ensure that the needs of all students are appropriately met and that all students understand the importance of quality and respect. All teaching will be sensitive and age appropriate, in both approach and content.

Safeguarding

Effective delivery of RSE necessarily allows students an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues, which may in turn lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff are trained in child protection and, if they receive a disclosure or have any concerns about a child in their class they can follow the schools safeguarding procedure.

If visiting speakers attend the school, the member of staff responsible for the talk will brief them in advance regarding the School's Safeguarding Policy. Their RSE sessions will be attended by a member of school staff.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluating

Staff will be given the opportunity to reflect upon the delivery of the RSE curriculum through meetings with the Head of PSHE. Students will have the opportunity to review, reflect and evaluate their learning.

Parents and Corers

The policy and curriculum will be made available to parents on the school website, and a paper copy will be made available upon request. We will work closely with parents and seek feedback to ensure they are fully aware of the aspects of RSE that are delivered by external visitors.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education at EPCS up to 3 times before their child turns 16 in line with government guidance, from that point onwards if a student wishes to receive Sex Education the school will arrange for this to happen before they turn 16.

If students are withdrawn from Sex Education, alternative arrangements will be made for these students. The right to withdraw from lessons only relates to Sex Education in RSE and not the teaching of the biological aspects of reproduction and human growth. If parents have any queries and wish to withdraw their child from the Sex Education element they should contact the head teacher. There is no right to withdraw from the relationship aspect of RSE.

Annex 1 What Schools must cover (taken from the DFE statutory RSE guidance)

Families

Pupils should know

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

Students should know

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and media Students should know

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. Page 7 of 14
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. • not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. • the impact of viewing harmful content.
- that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being safe

Students should know

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Students should know

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).

- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

Reviewed and Revised:

February 2021

Responsibility for Implementation and Review: Curriculum Committee

Date of Next Review:

September 2021