



# PINEWOOD

*Est. 1875*

## **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY**

### **Introduction**

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, makes Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. Independent Schools are not obliged to teach Health Education but Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), known at Pinewood as Life Skills is already compulsory in independent schools, which are obliged to meet the Independent Schools Standards (ISS) as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Our RSE policy is written in accordance with the statutory guidance found in the Department for Education publication 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (June 2019). This guidance – referred to hereafter in this policy as 'RS/RSE RG 2019' - came into effect in September 2020 and will be reviewed every three years. [This document can be accessed through this link](#)

In this document, relationships and sex education (RSE) is defined as: 'learning about spiritual, moral, social, emotional and physical development and empowering pupils to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.' It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health' and is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school.

While we use RSE to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use relationships and sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

### **Aims and objectives**

We define the aims of RSE as learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up and making good, healthy relationships of all kinds. This includes sexual relationships, as well as other aspects of human sexuality and sexual health. RSE teaching is intended to equip children young people with the information, skills and values to make safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships as adults.

We support a sensitive, graduated and age-appropriate approach to RSE teaching through our Jigsaw curriculum, founded on the promotion of qualities such as mutual respect, trust and enjoyment. We teach an understanding and tolerance of different types of relationships, including for those with 'protected characteristics' (as defined by the Equalities Act 2010) and to cover LGBT+ topics ranging from diverse families to understanding gender identity.

We teach children about:

- The importance of family life
- Moral questions
- Relationship issues

- Respect for the views of other people
- The physical development and respect of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- The way humans reproduce
- Sex abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters

### **Context**

We teach RSE in the context of the school's aims and values. While RSE in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values, which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach RSE education in the belief that:

- It is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process
- It is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect
- Children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies
- Children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity
- Children need to learn the importance of self-control

We teach RSE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main teaching in our personal, social and health and citizenship education (Life-Skills) curriculum, it is also covered in other subject areas (for example, Science and PE).

In Life-Skills we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues.

We teach about the parts of the body and how these work reinforcing what has been learnt in Science lessons. The Science and Life Skills departments work closely to ensure that topics are taught at the same time, using the same terms and information. Children are encouraged to ask for help if they need it.

In both the Science and Life Skills lessons, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born in all three key stages.

### **Formal Teaching of RSE**

Aeronwy Davies, Pinewood Head of Life Skills, is responsible for coordinating the delivery of the RSE programme which will, in the main, be delivered by Form Tutors to Tutor groups. Tutors know the children well and have strong rapport with the individuals through their pastoral setting.

Teachers receive regular RSE training delivered during an INSET programme and will continue to undertake further training on a regular basis, including the option of online tutorials. The purpose of this training is to support teachers with the delivery of difficult topics and the handling of questions, as well as subject content and appropriate resources. Members of the Department are also able to benefit from other expert support within the school, including the Deputy Head/DSL, the Medical Team and the school's Well-Being and Counselling services. If a member of staff feels that they are unable to teach a particular topic or should an area of the curriculum require specialist input, staffing is adjusted accordingly.

The Department also holds regular termly meetings for its teachers during INSET, where ideas and resources are discussed, and lessons and pupil feedback are evaluated in order to inform future planning.

The Life skills scheme of work follows the six elements of the Jigsaw Programme of Study, Being Me in My World, Celebrating Difference, Dreams and Goals, Healthy Me, Relationships and Change Me. Each element nurtures positive relationships with self and others.

Science schemes of work are developed with the National Curriculum and ISEB Science syllabus in mind.

- In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other.
- In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.
- In Key Stage 3 internal sexual reproduction is taught in more detail, including physical and emotional changes, the effect of hormones, and how inheritance and environment issues can cause variation within a species.

In Key stage 2 (Years 5 & 6) we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. The teaching materials for the RSE lessons will be annually reviewed and carefully considered between the Heads of Science and Life Skills as well as the Heads of Schools and the Pre-Prep coordinators. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are made and born, how their bodies change during puberty. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children and answer questions with sensitivity and care.

While RSE is very largely a discussion-based course, the children evidence their work through a combination of worksheets and in class activities/discussions, which aren't always formalised. These include various resources and activities for pupils to aid their exploration of a subject, and include an end-of topic quiz as a means of self-assessment. This form of assessment allow pupils to raise a question or indicate to their teacher that they have not fully understood some elements of the subject. This allows the teacher concerned to re-visit the matters where pupils have indicated difficulties.

Teachers are mindful at all stages of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) when both designing and delivering the RSE curriculum. Teachers are aware of who these young people are in their class, and of the individual nature of their difficulties. They ensure in all lessons that they can access the information required and that they have understood it both from their verbal and written responses.

**Guidance on delivery of RSE – When reading these guidelines, the age of the pupil will always be considered.**

- Teachers and pupils should negotiate and agree age appropriate ground rules, e.g. about acceptable behaviour, appropriate language and contributions that are acceptable in lessons. These must be adhered to at all times.
- Staff must be vigilant for any concerns that they consider to be defined as child protection and the correct procedures are followed (see Confidentiality section below)
- Relationships or information provided must be purely factual and objective. Subjective, personal comments such as – “in my opinion...”, “I think...”, “If I were you...” are inappropriate for teachers to use when dealing with sensitive issues.
- Teachers dealing with sensitive issues should only use materials that are age appropriate, approved by the Heads of Life Skills, Science and Schools. As an example, the question of consent is dealt with in an age-appropriate manner at different stages of RSE teaching, and the pattern of returning to crucial issues in an increasingly detailed and sophisticated way in later years as pupils mature is an essential aspect of our approach to the subject.
- Key aspects of the law in this area are covered and include the age of consent, what consent is and is not and key definitions of terms such as harassment.

## **The role of parents**

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective, we:

- Invite parents of children in Year 5 to School to inform and consult with them about the school's RSE policy and practice through a question and answer session prior to the delivery of the RSE material to the pupils.
- Invite parents to complete online feedback forms about the delivery of the RSE content
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE content and policy.
- Encourage parents and, where appropriate, pupils to make use of the Teen Tips online resource provided by Pinewood which contains lots of further information about the topics raised in the RSE program.
- Ensure parents are made aware of any changes or amendments to this policy.
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school

## **Right to Withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the Sex Education element of the RSE programme that we teach in our school up to end of Year 6 (Primary Education). The parental right to withdraw pupils from RSE in Year 7 and 8 (Secondary Education) applies only to aspects of Sex Education which are not part of the Science curriculum. There is no right to withdraw a child from the Relationships Education or Health Education. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn they should discuss this with the Headmaster, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. Where appropriate, the child should be included in the discussion to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the RSE curriculum in this area. The School will document and take Minutes of any such meeting to ensure that an accurate record is kept.

Paragraphs 46-47 of the DfE RE/RSE SG 2019 document provide strong arguments as to the possible detrimental effects on the child of withdrawal from the Sex Education components of the CC course.

Once these discussions have taken place, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child. This approach is in line with DfE guidance.

## **Confidentiality**

Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency following protocols laid down in the safeguarding policy. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Tim Knapp) in the first instance. The DSL will then take appropriate action in consultation with health care professionals. (See also Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy).

## **RSE and the Law**

### **The Equality Act 2010 and Protected Characteristics**

At Pinewood we recognise that we are obliged to comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (See especially the guidance 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'). Under the provisions of this Act,

schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils with ‘protected characteristics’ ( i.e. because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation). We must also ‘make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage’ and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning our curriculum and individual lessons. We recognise that it is important to ensure that we do not tolerate discriminatory behaviour, and that we identify and tackle any occurrences.

We consider the make-up of our pupil body and put in additional support if necessary, taking positive action to deal with particular groups because of their protected characteristic. We work to facilitate good relationships between our pupils and confront issues such as sexism or gender stereotypes.

We see it as important to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between pupils and we monitor this via feedback from pupils in numerous ways, for example during class discussion and completion of tasks and self assessments in Life Skills lessons, through the annual ‘well-being questionnaire’ and through open discussions in lessons/form-time/well-being daily drop-in sessions. Pupils are taught in Life Skills about LGBT+ issues in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner.

## **LINKS TO ASSOCIATED SCHOOL POLICIES AND OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

This policy links to and should be read alongside and in conjunction with the following school policies in particular:

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Complementary Curriculum (PSHE) Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy

### **Other Relevant Documents**

The policy should also be read in conjunction with the other publications indicated on p7 of the DfE’s ‘RE/RSE SG 2019’ document, and especially:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools
- Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND Code of Practice
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance

### **Responsibility for the policy**

It is the responsibility of the Head of the Life-skills and Head of Science (SMF) to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our RSE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively.

Reviewed: October 2024  
Reviewed by Aeronwy Davies, Head of Life Skills  
Next Review Date: October 2025