

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

What Is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

Fortismere is a Foundation Secondary school of girls and boys aged between 11 and 18 years, who are drawn from diverse social, ethnic and religious backgrounds. This policy was developed with careful consideration to Relationships and Sex Education Governemnt Guidance 2020, including the statutory elements of RSE.

What Is RSE Policy?

In this document we will outline the aims of Fortismere School's RSE education, how we will address these aims and the process by which we will evaluate how successfully we achieve these aims

RSE Education

Principles and Values

Fortismere School believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life and an entitlement for all young people
- Encourage every student to contribute to our community and aim to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- Be set within this wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches.
- Be inclusive and teach inclusivity, incorporating LGBTQ+ and differing models of sexual orientation into all appropriate lessons
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views, and not promote any particular orientation or family structure. The important values are love, respect, safe choices and care for each other.
- Allow time to discuss and educate about the impact of technology on student attitudes, knowledge and wellbeing. This includes promoting healthy behaviour online, learning about potential dangers, and knowing how to apply UK law to online activity.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place openly and without embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up and consult them about the content of lessons.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

Sex and Relationship Education in this school has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices;
- learning the value of family life as well as stable and loving relationships;
- learning about 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.

Personal and Social Skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice;
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- managing conflict;
- empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

Knowledge and Understanding

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

Aims

The aim of RSE is 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:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; 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.
- 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 protected 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.

Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationship Education

Fortismere School delivers RSE through its Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) lessons at KS3 and KS4. Biological aspects of human reproduction are also covered within Science lessons.

Inclusion

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns. This will be of particular importance in relation to Pupil Premium students as well as our students with Special educational needs and disabilities. We will refer students to specialist support where we deem it appropriate.

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

Parent/Carer role & Right of Withdrawal of Students from Relationships and Sex Education

The school is aware that the primary role in young people's sex and relationships education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents and carers of young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from relationships and sex education in PSHE, but not that part covered in the statutory Science curriculum. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from any aspect of relationships and sex education, they should discuss this with the Head Teacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard and will provide appropriate sources of information for parents who wish to withdraw their children.

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents or the head teacher of any disclosure unless the head teacher has specifically requested them to do so. Teachers in line with best practice will implement a Working Agreement with their class of students. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the school's Safeguarding Lead and/or Head Teacher.

The school's Safeguarding Lead will deal with Child Protection matters in consultation with the Education Safeguarding Team, Children and Families and health care professionals (see also Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy). Other support agencies working within the school classroom context are governed by the school's confidentiality policy, although health professionals such as school counsellors/nurses will be bound by their professional confidentiality guidelines.

In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16 year old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

the young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice.

child protection issues will be considered under the school's procedures.

the young person will be properly counselled about contraception, including information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first. Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

Dealing with inappropriate sexual behaviour

Inappropriate sexual behaviour can include: Inappropriate touching, Sexting i.e. sharing of inappropriate images, Cyberbullying, Sexual Harassment and unwanted or inappropriate sexual behaviour

All staff, as well as the designated specialist PSHE team, are regularly updated on local and national issues related to RSE and best practice approaches. This includes raising concerns about inappropriate sexual behaviour, and who to go to for this information, so that it can be addressed.