

Evergreen School



RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

This policy is intended to help and support pupils through their physical, emotional and moral development, enabling them to make informed life choices confidently and furthering their respect for themselves and others as they move through life.

Introduction

The department for education provides the following definition for Relationship and Sex Education Guidance (2019):

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools.

The new curriculum is now mandatory and hence Evergreen School will teach it.

The term Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is used in this policy to stress that our provision goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, along with developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

Rationale

Evergreen School believes that when pupils learn about their physical development, together with awareness of their relationships with others, the pupils’ ability to lead their own lives competently and with fulfilment is greatly enhanced. Evergreen pupils have a wide range of learning needs, therefore our approach to delivering RSE will be adapted to take those needs into account.

Aim

To provide a rich and supportive learning environment where pupils can develop their knowledge and understanding, self-worth and confidence, and relationship skills. This will include:

- valuing themselves as unique individuals
- keeping themselves and others healthy and safe
- developing skills in communication, decision making and assertiveness
- knowing how and where to gain information and support
- participating in society and leading fulfilled lives

Outcomes

- For pupils to feel safe and secure as their bodies develop
- For pupils to develop their communicative abilities with regard to the vocabulary used in RSE
- For pupils to have the confidence to approach adults for help to stay safe and secure
- For pupils to access knowledge and information about their bodies as part of a planned and established programme, delivered in a timely manner
- For pupils to have accurate knowledge of their bodies that reflects their age and physical development, delivered at the appropriate developmental level for the individual child
- To raise pupils’ self-esteem and confidence with regard to their bodies
- To develop skills in their relationships with others.
- To help pupils understand their feelings and behaviour
- To develop skills in language, decision making, choice and assertiveness

- To give practice in strategies which reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse.
- To provide the confidence to be an active member of society.
- To support access to information and facilities.
- To promote acceptable and appropriate behaviour in public and private situations

Agreed procedures

- RSE will mainly be delivered throughout the curriculum through ongoing practice; themed days, weeks or a series of RSE sessions may also be planned for pupils individually or in groups as appropriate.
- Teachers are responsible for deciding how best to support the delivery of the RSE curriculum for the children in their class, depending on pupil needs and developmental stages.
- Different themes for RSE work will be followed during the school year (see Content below) with teachers logging how they have delivered the theme within their class group
- Pupils will have a RSE target set 3 times per year and this target will be monitored using MAPP as for all other targets. Targets may be delivered through ongoing classroom practice or via specific RSE sessions.
- Sessions may be delivered to single or mixed gender groups; staff will decide depending on the pupil needs, the context for supporting best pupil outcomes and the content of the session.
- Staff will avoid embarrassment and protect pupils' privacy by always depersonalising discussions
- The correct anatomical name of body parts will be used including the terms penis, vulva, vagina, bottom, breast.
- If a member of staff is concerned about what a pupil has revealed they will follow school's child protection procedures.
- If changes happen to the delivery of Relationship and Sex Education in primary schools, we will always consult parents.
- Consideration of cultural and family backgrounds will be taken into account, alongside the statutory obligations of the schools to deliver RSE.

Content

The RSE programme will follow the five themes of the Warwickshire 'All About me' programme which incorporates RSE and the Protective Behaviours programme. Protective Behaviours is designed to encourage children to actively keep themselves safe through understanding themselves, their choices and boundaries and by accessing safe adult support. Evergreen staff have been trained in ways to adapt the protective behaviours programme for all pupils at Evergreen

The content of the RSE curriculum at Evergreen will focus on the child's identity, body and body changes during puberty. Relationships will focus on social skills and safe relationships. Teaching about sex will not form part of the general curriculum.

The five themes are:

1. All about me - personal identity
2. My relationships - families, friendships and personal relationships
3. My body - understanding anatomy, autonomy, and changes during puberty
4. My thoughts, feelings and behaviours - emotional literacy
5. My choices and personal boundaries - understanding consent

The content of each theme will be decided by the class teacher depending on the age, cognitive ability and physical stage of development of pupils on an individual basis throughout the school year. For example theme 3: some children may learn all about the changes of puberty for both genders whilst others may focus on being encouraged to communicate any discomfort associated with puberty such as period pains.

Staff will draw on existing teaching methods as appropriate to deliver the curriculum; for example theme 5 work could consist of understanding how to say 'no' to unwelcome physical touch for one child and would be delivered through monitoring and verbalising responses to TacPac for another.

The five themes will be delivered across the school year as follows:

Autumn term 1: All about me

Autumn term 2: My relationships

Spring term 1: My body

Spring term 2: My thoughts, feelings and behaviours

Summer term 1: My choices and personal boundaries

This avoids delivering important knowledge and skills in the second half of the summer term when older children are often focussed on moving to secondary school. It also enables staff to support children with their understanding across the year, allowing for questions to be answered and learning to be revisited to ensure a depth of understanding within the child's capacities.

Target Setting and Monitoring

Teachers will set 1 target per term that is an RSE target, in line with all other target setting and reviewing at Evergreen. It is important that the targets reflect the priority learning needs of the pupils in relation to RSE. Therefore a pupil may have 3 targets across the year that all relate to understanding changes in puberty, understanding personal boundaries or developing healthy relationships with peers. It is more important that a child has the opportunity to learn an essential area in depth than having targets that demonstrate 'coverage' of a curriculum with no real knowledge or skills gained. When setting targets for RSE, teachers should be guided by the pupil, their needs and their EHC Plan, as with all other areas of target setting.

Morals and values framework

Our approach to RSE will be based on the following principles:

- The value of stable loving relationships
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views.
- The development of relationships, based on mutual consent rather than coercion.
- The right not to be abused by other people or be taken advantage of.
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.

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 sensitive account of different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias.

Equal opportunities: the School's approach to RSE will take account of: Gender Diversity

We will consider the particular needs of boys as well as girls and approaches that actively engage them in understanding one another. We shall also be proactive in modelling equality towards different genders through the use of positive language and access to opportunities. Incidents of

sexism and sexist bullying are likely to be rare amongst pupils but staff will respond with sensitivity where they are felt to occur, working to support pupils in appropriate communication and social skills

Ethnic and cultural diversity

Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will inform parents and carers about the school's approach to RSE and the statutory obligations. Additionally staff will consult with parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for and understanding of the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

Varying home backgrounds

We recognise that our pupils 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, that all families are treated equally and that different models of families are presented to children as equally valuable.

Sexuality

Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality as appropriate to the developmental stage of the individual pupil. Incidents of homophobic bullying are likely to be rare amongst pupils but staff will respond with sensitivity where they are felt to occur, working to support pupils in appropriate communication and social skills

The teaching programme for RSE

We intend that all pupils shall experience a programme of RSE at a level which is commensurate with their developmental age and physical development with appropriate adaptations for learning needs. We support the use of correct words for body parts and functions, of visual material which is clear and unmistakable and of anatomically correct three dimensional models. Continuity and a common approach throughout the school will be essential.

Pupils who use alternative methods of communication

Some pupils have physical, visual or hearing impairments. Some are unable to use speech and may use signing, symbols and/or communication aids and switches. Staff will adapt their teaching of RSE to ensure that all pupils have equal access despite communication issues.

Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are not excluded from the programme. Using appropriate methods they will experience the core content of self-awareness, gender awareness, body recognition and privacy.

Pupils with autism may require individual teaching to meet their specific needs e.g. PECS may be incorporated. Explicit teaching and use of pictures and visual aids is essential to avoid confusion.

Ground rules and distancing techniques

Ground rules must be established in classes during RSE lessons

- No one (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in an activity
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way and staff will model use of anatomically correct vocabulary
- Appropriate methods for RSE use activities which "distance" the subject matter from the pupils, by using pictures, stories and models. This allows pupils to learn about new ideas in a 'one step removed' approach as endorsed by the Protective Behaviours programme.

- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class or raises concerns about abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of abuse the usual Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures should be followed.

The school nurse

The school nurse can play a key role in supporting the teacher in RSE both in terms of advice, input in lessons and providing resources. The school will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the school nurse.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Most of pupils' informal RSE education occurs within the family and the school's programme will complement and build on this in co-operation with homes. We will work in partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSE provision and content. Teaching about sex will not form part of the general curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships education in primary school or from Health education; however if a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have.

Parents and carers should be reassured that information given to their child will be delivered in a timely and sensitive manner and that they will be informed in advance about what their child will be learning relating to specific knowledge e.g. changes during puberty, information about periods.

Some parents may find it hard to cope with their child's physical and emerging sexual development and may prefer school to take the initiative. Staff are willing to discuss with parents any matters which they are concerned about. It is important there is no conflict of information given to the pupils.

We make resources available for any parent to use if they wish to help their child at home.

Session for parents/carers to find out more about our teaching programme and resources will be organised on a regular basis.

Our Policy on Specific Matters

Sexual Abuse

We are aware that some of our pupils may have experienced abuse. We do not accept that this is a reason for avoiding education about sex and personal matters. Indeed it makes it more essential; such teaching may help pupils avoid some abusive situations. If disclosure takes place during a lesson or to a member of staff at other times, the Child Protection and Safeguarding guidelines make it clear what action should be taken. Any disclosures will be treated in a calm and supportive manner to avoid causing further anxiety and distress.

Resources

The most valuable resource in the education of our pupils is to be found in the understanding, experience, skills and creativity of our staff. To avoid confusing pupils, some explicit resources will be needed – anatomically correct models, cut outs of bodies and body parts, illustrative materials, educational videos. Resources will be in a central area and updated regularly.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluating the effectiveness of the Curriculum

Monitoring will be achieved by the following methods:

- Classroom observations
- Discussion with teachers

- Sharing of practice and resources across classes via termly class logs – this will enable a bank of appropriate resources to be established that reflects the varied needs of pupils at Ridgeway School.

Evaluation will be achieved by

- Analysing pupils' progress and attainment in RSE targets
- Feedback from pupils as appropriate
- Feedback from families

Other related policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Assessment recording and reporting Policy
- Anti-Bullying
- Online Safety