



# FOREST SCHOOL

## RSE POLICY – SENIOR SCHOOL

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy was developed in response to Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education regulations and guidance published for implementation in 2020.

1.2 Please read this policy in conjunction with;

Anti-bullying Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

PSHEE Policy

Mental Health

Transgender

1.3 The consultation process for the original development of this policy has involved:

- Pupil focus groups / school council (Lower school)
- Review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils
- Consultation with wider school community e.g. Matron, DSLs
- Parent Survey
- Prep School consultation
- Parent forums

## 2 What Is Relationships and Sex Education?

The term Relationships and Sex Education RSE- is used in this policy rather than sex education. This is to stress that we go beyond the provision of biological information and also focus on

attitudes and values, developing self-esteem and helping to provide the skills needed to manage relationships.

According to the latest DfEE guidance (2019),

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living 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.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role.

At secondary, teaching will build on knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils’ understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs, alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching mental wellbeing is central to these subjects.

In all schools, teaching should reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.”

### 3 Principles and Values

Forest School believes that RSE should:

- Address grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour sensitively and clearly.
- Not encourage early sexual experimentation. It will teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Encourage every pupil to contribute positively to our community and support others within the community.
- Be set within a wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches.
- Encourage the respecting of different views. We as a community are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important foundations are healthy relationships, respect and support for each other.
- Generate an honest and open atmosphere where questions and discussions on relationship matters can take place without any stigma, judgment or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, healthy relationships and guiding the journey into adulthood. We aim to work in partnership with parents and pupils, to ensure we are constantly reviewing what we do, how we do it and most importantly why we do it.

- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, external organisations, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

Relationships and Sex Education in this School has three main elements:

### **3.1 Attitudes and Values**

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

### **3.2 Personal and Social Skills**

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- learning about the importance and power of self respect and respect for others
- 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 pupils with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

### **3.3 Knowledge and Understanding**

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- Learning and understand what is and what is not acceptable in terms of behaviour in all relationships not just intimate relationships;
- 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.

## 4 Aims

- 4.1 Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and healthy relationships, are more likely to be discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and are more likely to have fulfilling, nurturing and healthy relationships.
- 4.2 There is no evidence to suggest that RSE makes pupils more likely to enter into sexual activity.
- 4.3 Forest School believes that pupils have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate RSE.
- 4.4 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 pupils for an adult life in which they can:
  - 4.4.1 develop positive and healthy personal and social values and a moral compass 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 healthy relationship they want.
  - 4.4.2 pupils should understand that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing
  - 4.4.3 avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
  - 4.4.4 communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
  - 4.4.5 develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
  - 4.4.6 understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
  - 4.4.7 understand the reasons for having protected sex.
  - 4.4.8 have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
  - 4.4.9 be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary.
  - 4.4.10 know how the law applies to sexual relationships.
  - 4.4.11 understand how there may be links to other issues in Wellbeing Education (PSHE) and to be able to manage social and peer pressures that may be present in their journey into adulthood.

## 5 Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationship Education

- Forest School specifically delivers Relationships and Sex Education through its Wellbeing Education Programme, RS and Science lessons at KS3, and KS4.
- 5.1 Much of the Relationships and Sex Education at Forest School takes place within Wellbeing (PSHEE) lessons. Wellbeing teachers generally deliver the Wellbeing Curriculum with support from professionals where appropriate.
- 5.2 Form Tutors and Heads of House work closely with their tutees over a number of years and we believe that they are usually the best people to work with the students on many of the RSE topics as they are aware of each student's individual circumstances. Therefore in Year 7, we endeavour to ensure that Form Tutors provide RSE education in Wellbeing lessons. RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the Wellbeing curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty are also included. The Science National Curriculum is largely followed by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.
- 5.3 In Years 7-9, pupils have one Wellbeing lesson a fortnight. In Years 10-11, RSE is delivered through a Wellbeing morning in the Lent term of Y10 with a follow up in the Trinity term and also through the tutor time programme.

## 6 RSE Programme

Year 7	Michaelmas Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendships/bullying</li> <li>• Family</li> </ul>
Year 7	Lent Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puberty in boys and girls</li> <li>• Menstruation</li> <li>• Healthy Relationships</li> <li>• Sex – Laws/Consent/Nudes</li> <li>• FGM</li> </ul>
Year 8	Michaelmas Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Esteem and resilience</li> <li>• Bereavement</li> <li>• Divorce</li> </ul>
Year 8	Lent Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping with change in relationships</li> <li>• Bereavement</li> <li>• Divorce</li> </ul>

Year 8	Trinity Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual relationships</li> <li>• Contraception</li> <li>• STIs</li> <li>• Myth busting</li> <li>• Personal Hygiene</li> </ul>
Year 9	Trinity Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making re. Sex and relationships</li> <li>• LGBTQIA+</li> <li>• Pornography</li> </ul>
Year 10	Wellbeing Morning Lent/Trinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abusive relationships</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Sexual abuse</li> <li>• Sexual offences and the Law</li> <li>• Peer Pressure</li> <li>• Pornography</li> <li>• STIs- symptoms, treatment, prevention.</li> <li>• Contraception</li> </ul>
Year 11	Wellbeing Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various – depends on speaker</li> </ul>
Sixth Form		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PDM – sessions on Sex, family and changing circumstances.</li> </ul>

6.1 Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some pupils may find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons safe space expectations are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When pupils ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the safe space expectations established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the pupils, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

## 7 Methodology and Resources

- 7.1 A wide range of teaching methods are used so that pupils can participate actively in their own learning. Quizzes, case studies, scenarios, role plays, guest speakers, group discussion are all utilised throughout the RSE Programme. Teaching resources are kept up to date and are selected carefully for their appropriateness to the pupils and topic content.
- 7.2 If a teacher is uncomfortable with delivering part of the curriculum, support is offered by the Head of Wellbeing Education or by more experienced teachers/HoHs.
- 7.3 Informal assessment is carried out during Wellbeing lessons and comprises of questionnaire feedback and summary sheets. We do not formally assess in Wellbeing lessons, but we do encourage Year 7 tutors to refer to Wellbeing in tutor comments on reports.

## 8 Monitoring and evaluation

The programme is regularly evaluated by the Head of Wellbeing Education and the views of pupils and teachers are used to make changes to the programme on a regular basis. Current issues/news items are also incorporated into the curriculum to make it relevant to pupils.

## 9 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 9.1 9.1 We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different religious backgrounds including complying with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The topics that are included in the core guidance will be appropriately handled to ensure sensitivity for all. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups and if this is the case we will try our best to ensure we adapt our teaching provision where and when possible.. However, in Years 10 and 11 , when deemed appropriate, there may be guest speakers/presentations which will be to a whole year group. **Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief (collectively known as protected characteristics).**

### 9.2 Pupils with Special Educational Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive Relationships and Sex Education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary.

### 9.3 Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively, respectfully 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. Our pastoral support will also take into account the needs of gay, lesbian, transgender or bi-sexual pupils. We shall actively tackle any homophobic bullying.

### 9.4 Gender

Both boys and girls have the right to equal RSE at Forest School and we consider topics and approaches that actively engage both. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

## 10 Working with Parents/carers and the wider community

Forest School works closely with parents/carers when planning and delivering RSE sessions and aims to inform parents in advance of what will be covered in Wellbeing lessons. Parents are given opportunities to fill in surveys and participate in forums when necessary.

## 11 Right of Withdrawal of Students from Sex Education within RSE

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. This does not include those parts which are in the wider statutory curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons). Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with the Head of Wellbeing and the Warden at the earliest opportunity. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, Forest School will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, Forest School will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, Forest School will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. **The process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the Head of Wellbeing or the Warden may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.**

Parents are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses.

## 12 Safeguarding, reports or abuse and confidentiality

**12.1 At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools should and can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.**

12.2 Good practice allows young people to discuss potentially sensitive issues safely and in a secure environment. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding disclosures. All pupils in the Senior School are made aware of how to raise concerns. This should include when they have a concern about a friend or peer. Please read the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information on these processes and staff's responsibility within this.

12.3 If external organisations and agencies are brought in to support the delivery of these subjects they will be pre-approved and discussed beforehand to ensure they following the expectations outlined in this policy.

12.4 There are important points for teachers in terms of how they approach this content. Teachers delivering this programme must be informed that if a pupil discusses or raises topics including self-harm and suicide, they must not give instructions or methods and avoid using emotive language, videos or images. If teachers' delivering this content have concerns about a specific pupil in relation to self-harm or suicidal ideation, they must follow the safeguarding procedures.

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.

### 13 Support available to pupils

The school takes its role in the promotion of pupil welfare seriously. Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and provide caring and sensitive pastoral support to pupils. Matron offers a health and support service to pupils and where appropriate pupils can be referred to Tutor, HOH, HOS, DHP, Director of Pupil Welfare, or Place to Be or Place to Talk. The school will keep up to date with the development of local services and national agencies/helplines. **There is also a designated role in the school titled the Director of Pupil Welfare who oversees equality, diversity, inclusion, mental health and safeguarding across the community and will support pupils directly or consult with pastoral leads to support with specific questions or developments of the RSE programme.**