

Cherwell College Oxford

Department for Education (DfE) registration: 931/6016; DfE Social care unique reference number: SC473682

RSE policy: Relationships and Sex Education

The Department for Education (DfE) has published statutory guidance about how Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education should be implemented in schools across England by 2020 (DfE, 2019a). Schools are encouraged to implement the new curriculum from September 2019.

NB. Parents have rights to withdraw their child from RSE lessons

The overall aims of the College and the curriculum are for all young people to become:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve their goals.
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.
- Aware and respectful towards other people's views, beliefs and values.

Cherwell College will equip students with the tools to develop healthy and safe friendships and relationships and promote students to experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age, ability and development to ensure all they have equal access to the Curriculum. Contraceptive advice to older pupils will be taught, in the context of sexual intimacy and safer sex, that intercourse should always involve using a condom. Questions about forms of contraception will be answered accurately and honestly within the student's ability to understand. If students need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel.

What is Sex and Relationship Education?

The term Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), is used in this policy rather than sex education. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also to focus on clarifying attitudes and values, developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

***According to DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', RSE is:
'...lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development.
It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.
It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health'.***

Furthermore, students will look at the complex issues of relationships and peer pressure online, complementing the e-Safety policy in using technology safely, responsibly and respectfully.

Students will be encouraged to interact positively and to understand their legal responsibilities when using social media and online technology. Lessons will also cover how to keep personal information private, and help students navigate the virtual world, challenge harmful content and balance online and offline worlds.

Objectives

The guidance suggests that RSE should have three main elements:

1) **Knowledge and understanding**

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

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2) Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for 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.

3) Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Cherwell College approach to RSE consists of:

- a) RSE modules within Key Stages, delivered within a planned P.S.H. Education programme.
- b) PSHE is currently taught through one discrete lesson per year group, each week.
- c) Provision of appropriate information through: leaflets, books, posters, appropriate websites as highlighted in the RSE Scheme of Work and external agencies/ speakers.
- d) The lead coordinator responsible for the planning and assessment for PSHE: Mor Cohen Asor.
- e) Staff receive specific PSHE training and accreditation in the effective delivery of PSHE, in addition to updated Safeguarding Training, (NSPCC September 2018 and FGM – Female Genital Mutilation).
- f) Relevant health care professionals will play a key role in supporting RSE lessons through supporting teachers in terms of advice and resources.
- g) Seminars and tutorials, in which values are explored in support of developing positive relationships and developing emotional awareness and management.
- h) Students will be consulted about their RSE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.
- i) Parents and carers will be actively consulted about the RSE needs of their child and their views will be central to developing the provision.
- j) A member of the senior management team will support staff, parents and carers in ensuring the RSE curriculum meets the needs and abilities of students.

Methodology and resources

A range of teaching methods enable students to actively participate in their own learning. This includes quizzes, case studies, role play, video/DVD, group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers.

Where it is regarded as particularly beneficial, students are divided into single gender groups for lessons. Occasional use of theatre in education productions also forms part the programme. Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that students are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected based on their appropriateness to students.

Assessment

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Students' progress in RSE is assessed as part of the PSHE assessment – reports will be sent to parents. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is recorded termly in-line with other subjects and the schools assessment policy.

Creating a safe and supportive atmosphere

PSHE involves a range of activities that relate to family lifestyles, personal identity, behaviour and values as discussed. Due to the sensitive nature of such topics it is therefore essential to help students feel safe and comfortable with their environment and within the P.S.H.E. lesson. To do this, all teaching staff involved in delivering P.S.H.E. strive to ensure that the following procedures and actions are embedded within every lesson:

- Use age/ level appropriate resources;
- Use a range of different activities in consideration of different learning styles;
- Pay consideration to groupings;
- Give students the opportunity to speak, take part in discussions, time to think and an opportunity to choose not to speak if they do not wish to;
- Use a question box at appropriate times and within appropriate lessons.

These actions are highlighted and enforced with students through setting 'ground rules'. These are a set of rules which are established with the group, (both staff and students) to help the students to not only feel safe but also to enable students to get the most from their learning. Examples of the rules are as follows:

1. Be willing to work as a team;
2. Respect each other's views, opinions and beliefs;
3. Always listen to each other;
4. Don't be afraid to say, 'I don't know';
5. Use the correct terminology.
6. Put your hand up if you want to speak to make sure we don't speak over each other;
7. Have fun and learn from each other!
8. Confidentiality – be aware that some things might not be suitable to share.

(In addition, students are made aware if they share something that may mean they are at risk or harm, the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead must be informed by staff).

These rules are adapted to suit the needs and ability of each group. Teaching staff will endeavour to make sure that their own personal views are not imposed on students.

They will also try to present the facts to students so that they are able to make informed choices.

Although the law states there is no parental right to withdraw from relationships education at primary or secondary. Parents have the right to excuse their child from sex education at both primary and secondary, but a student can opt in from the age of 15 years.

Staff are open to discuss any concerns parents and carers may have in relation to RSE and the needs of their child. Cherwell College works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and about how they can contribute at home.

The law requires that, from September 2019, relationships and sex education (RSE) is taught in all secondary schools in England. In addition, National Curriculum Science* (*which is taught in maintained schools) includes some elements of sex education.

Equality

RSE is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination and is mindful of individuals' religious, spiritual and moral beliefs. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act, (2010) to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT).

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RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice (including homophobia) and promote understanding, respect and diversity, (in-line with our Anti-Bullying and Child Protection policies). Staff have received mental health and well-being training, to support students in developing qualities and skills such as resilience, confidence, self-respect and self-control.

Reviewed: September 2024

Next review: September 2025

