



PENTREBANE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

Jan 2024 - Version 1



This policy has been established through discussions with, and ratification by our Governing Body

Introduction

At Pentrebane Primary School we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a core part of this development and forms a part of our wider Curriculum provision. By providing children with an understanding of healthy and respectful relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider effective RSE to be a fundamental part of our approach to supporting pupils to grow into confident, caring, responsible and respectful young citizens.

RSE is taught within the Health and Wellbeing area of learning and experience. In addition, some aspects of the RSE programme will be covered through:

- Science curriculum
- Computing
- Circle times
- Assemblies
- Class Stories
- PE in the context of health and hygiene

RSE is lifelong learning about personal, physical, moral and emotional development. It should teach children and young people to develop and form positive values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

What is RSE?

RSE is a positive and protective part of the Curriculum for Wales. It plays a central role in supporting learners' rights to enjoy fulfilling, healthy and safe relationships throughout their lives. Central to the Curriculum for Wales is an aspiration for every child and young person to achieve the four purposes of the curriculum.

A rights and equity based RSE curriculum helps ensure that all learners can develop an understanding of how people's faith, beliefs, human rights and cultures are related to all aspects of RSE and how these rights can contribute to the freedom, dignity, well-being and safety of all people. At Pentrebane we also discuss RSE in the context of the Rights protected by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



At Pentrebane, RSE supports our pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and values to understand how relationships and sexuality shape their own lives and the lives of others. Our pupils will be equipped and empowered to seek support on issues relating to RSE and to advocate for self and others.

RSE is a mandatory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales for all learners from age 3 to 16. This means that all learners must receive this education. There is no right to withdraw from RSE.

Vision for our RSE Curriculum

At Pentrebane we aim to provide a consistent standard of relationships, sexuality and health education across the school. We want to help all our pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy and to promote responsible behaviour; including both online and offline behaviours. We aim to create a positive culture of communication around issues of relationships and teach our pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies. We provide a framework in which sensitive and stage appropriate discussions can take place across the school. We prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene. We give our pupils an understanding of reproduction and sexual development and provide all pupils with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to make positive and healthy choices concerning relationships as they grow up and deal with risk. We want all our pupils to be able to combat exploitation and violence/abuse.

Aims of our RSE Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is embedded within our Health and Wellbeing AoLE and is set out as per Appendix 1, however, this will be adapted when necessary. We have developed the curriculum considering the age, stage, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an age appropriate manner so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

There are 3 National elements that the RSE curriculum is based on. These are;

- Relationships and identity
- Sexual health and wellbeing (at an developmentally appropriate level)
- Empowerment, safety and respect

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).



Roles & Responsibilities

- The governing body

The governing body has delegated the approval of this policy and will review its arrangements and effectiveness on a regular basis.

- The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school. The headteacher also:

- Ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity
- Resources are readily accessible to support teaching and learning
- Monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the policy

- Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Monitoring progress

Class teachers are responsible for teaching RSE at Pentrebane. Teachers will reply to, and answer, children's questions sensitively and openly. They will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the different faiths' views and avoid any negative impressions. Teachers will need to answer questions that may arise through the direct teaching of RSE, as well as those that may be asked at other times. All questions will be handled sensitively and set within a general context.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher. Questions which teachers feel uncertain about answering should be discussed with a senior member of staff and answered at a later date.

- Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Pupils' views, as always, will be sought as part of our ongoing monitoring and planning for RSE within the school and this will be established through the usual channels already established within the school.



- 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:

- Will carry out our statutory duty to consult with parents and governors on the contents of this policy
- Inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice (available on the website)
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school

Developmentally Appropriate Teaching

Welsh Government requires that the RSE provided must be 'developmentally appropriate' for learners. Therefore, within our school, we will always take account of a range of factors such as the learner's age, knowledge and maturity and any additional learning needs. RSE needs to be developmentally appropriate for each learner. The age of learners should be one of the criteria by which teachers decide upon the appropriateness of content; however, there will be other factors they will need to consider when planning for this element of the Curriculum.

Factors such as the physical and mental and emotional development of learners should also be taken into account. This is essential to ensuring learners are kept safe from information for which they are not sufficiently mature to process. This, however, should not be a reason for not providing children with the essential information they need as they develop physically, mentally and emotionally; developmentally appropriate RSE requires the coverage of subjects that are integral to learners' development.

Whole School Organisation of RSE within our Schools

Our RSE curriculum will support and build on each learner's knowledge, skills and values in appropriate ways throughout their development and create safe and empowering environments which build on learners' experiences both within and beyond the educational setting providing positive alternatives to some learners' experiences.

Set out below are the key principles regarding how RSE is organised and embedded at our School:

- RSE is part of a whole-school approach and effectively integrated and coordinated across the curriculum. Effective RSE requires specialist expertise, time and resources which the school will regularly evaluate to ensure are in place. This will ensure a supportive

Working together, building an inclusive and nurturing community of kindness, honesty and respect.



environment is created to ensure learners and practitioners are safe to discuss and learn about issues which may be sensitive or challenging.

- RSE will be interdisciplinary and cross-curricular in its approach to content, knowledge and understanding and in the way it is explored. RSE is a broad and complex area that includes biological, social, psychological, spiritual, ethical and cultural dimensions that evolve over the lifespan.

- All practitioners contribute to the school's RSE priorities and professional learning is a key requirement for delivery of high quality RSE. As a federation we enable all practitioners to access learning that can support them to develop confidence and knowledge regarding RSE.

- RSE will always be delivered in a way that is inclusive. This helps ensure that all learners can see themselves, their families, their communities and each other reflected across the curriculum and can learn to value difference and diversity as a source of strength. This contributes to a cohesive, fair and equitable society that equips learners with skills for life.

- Provision draws on specialist services and expertise, and we engage with local communities. Our curriculum will always be mindful of the different perspectives and backgrounds within our local community.

- Our approach to RSE will be protective and preventative, considering how learners might need to be supported to:

- understand and cope with change, conflicts and pressure;
- have the knowledge to recognise discrimination and violence, including Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence;
- seek help and advice where appropriate.

- The teaching of RSE will respond to and be respectful of the lived experiences of learners. The approach to RSE involves recurring themes and topics which reinforce and build on the learners' developing understanding and changing needs and encourages learners to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. Practitioners recognise learners' social, physical, emotional and cognitive development and needs, as well as their evolving knowledge and experience.

- Progression in RSE is a continuous process aiming to improve overall learner well-being and safety and to realise the four purposes. As learners progress, they will build on previous learning: consolidating and strengthening the same dispositions; knowledge and skills and applying them in new, relevant contexts.

Delivery of RSE Curriculum

Our Relationships and Sexuality Education programme will be delivered in a developmentally appropriate and sensitive manner by class teachers. Teaching is normally taught in mixed gender groups, though some content is covered in single sex groups e.g. menstrual hygiene, single sex question sessions, etc.

We aim to provide a learning atmosphere where children feel safe and relaxed, and where they feel confident to engage in discussions around potentially sensitive subjects and themes. Ground rules in class and across the school are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and teaching RSE. Clear ground rules are established in partnership with the class, then reinforced at the start of each relevant lesson.



As a minimum, ground rules are likely to include the following basic guidelines:

- Listen politely to each other
- Everyone gets a turn to speak, if they want to
- Everyone has a right not to speak
- Everyone's contribution is respected
- We don't ask or have to answer any personal questions
- We use anatomically correct language when we have learnt it

Pupil's questions will be dealt with honestly and sensitively and in an age appropriate way. In Junior classes, a question box will be available for pupils to ask anonymous questions. If staff are faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, techniques such as distancing, the use of a question box, or creating a time to talk to a child individually will be used. Children may also be signposted back to parents/carers and the teacher will contact the parents/carers to give a context to the conversations that have been held in class. If needed the school can provide additional support links to external agencies or resources that can better support Pupils and their families.

The monitoring and evaluation of delivery of RSE within our school is overseen by the Health and Wellbeing lead. This person will be a first point of contact regarding any issues with Curriculum or wider issues that may arise relating to the area of RSE. Monitoring is carried out on an annual basis, in line with the schools wider MER timetable of activities and Governing Body Annual Curriculum Evaluation.

If any questions raise safeguarding concerns, teachers will refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Since RSE incorporates the development of self-esteem and relationships, pupils' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of school life including the playground. It is important then that all staff understand they have a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are dealing with children.

In-School Counselling & Support

- At Pentrebane we have a school based Thrive counsellor and have ELSA - an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant. Thrive approach is a therapeutic technique to help support our pupils with their social and emotional development. It is a whole school strategy used to help us to understand our pupil's needs as shown by their behaviour. ELSA is an initiative developed and supported by educational psychologists. It recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed. The majority of ELSA work is delivered on an individual basis, but sometimes small group work is more appropriate, especially in the areas of social and friendship skills. Sessions are fun, we use a range of

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activities such as: games, role-play with puppets or therapeutic activities such as mindfulness or arts and craft. Examples of things covered on the course are social skills, emotions, bereavement, social stories and therapeutic stories, anger management, self-esteem, counselling skills such as solution focus and friendship.

We also have support from the Inspire team who work with pupil's that we have identified as being in need through teacher assessment and through using the Motional on-line support tool. Motional measures and positively impacts on the emotional health of our pupils. It supports access to a healthy life and learning through improved emotional well-being. Following the disruption to learning caused by the pandemic, we are increasingly challenged to support the mental health and emotional well-being of our pupils and having these support mechanisms in place is vital to the well-being of our pupils.

There are set policies in place should anything be disclosed of a safeguarding nature and, if it is felt necessary, additional work can be put in, to work with pupils on a longer-term basis or supporting families through our Play Therapy program.

The advice and sessions provided by our Thrive, ELSA, Inspire and Play Therapy staff is confidential and children know that they can discuss things, which may be personal to them, in a safe environment. Our staff are also in a position to provide any additional support or resource, or direct Parents/Carers to external agencies that may be able to help.

External agencies, including health, can also enrich the area of RSE and ensure that Pupils receive a balanced and well supported experience of RSE at our schools. Health professionals and specialist external agencies who are involved with our school will enhance the RSE programme.

Confidentiality

Teachers conduct RSE lessons (or lessons that incorporate RSE principles) in a sensitive manner. 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 outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse or exploitation. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the designated person responsible for child protection as a matter of urgency. Disclosure of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police (either by the teacher to whom it is disclosed or by the DSL). Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality.

Equalities and Diversity

Planning and resources are reviewed to ensure they comply with equalities legislation and the school's equal opportunities policy. All RSE is taught without bias and in line with legal responsibilities such as those contained within the Equality Act (2010). Topics are presented



using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff delivering RSE will not influence the teaching of the subject in school. In our school we seek to recognise and embrace the diverse nature of our community. We aim to value and celebrate religious, ethnic and cultural diversity as part of modern Britain. We will explore different cultural beliefs and values and encourage activities that challenge stereotypes and discrimination and present children with accurate information based on the law. We will use a range of teaching materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our community and encourage a sense of inclusiveness. We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

Monitoring & Review

The delivery of RSE will be monitored by the Senior Management Team through, for example, reviewing planning, learning walks and lesson observations. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

RSE will be monitored and evaluated, in line with all AoLE areas within the school, as part of our annual MER cycle.

This policy will be reviewed on a 2 year cycle and approved by the Governing body in line with statutory guidance.



See Appendix 1 - Relationship and Sexuality Education Curriculum Map