

THE ROCHE SCHOOL
Relationships and Sex Education Policy

This policy which applies to the whole school is saved on the school shared system and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Information Sharing Category	School Shared System (Public copy provided on request)
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Responsible Area	Helen Parker

The Roche School Relationship and Sex Education Policy applies to The Roche School Nursery, our Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 2 at The Roche School.

The procedures described comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (The Education [Independent School Standards, England] Regulations 2010, as amended from January 2013) also known as the ISSRs.

In accordance with, and beyond the requirements of these regulations, The Roche School makes its policies available to view on the public area of the school's website – www.therocheschool.com.

National Context for Relationship and Sex Education

It is recognised that RSE is a cross-curricular area, which impinges on all aspects of students' personal and social education and development. At The Roche School, we have a responsibility to provide education on relationships, health and wellbeing and sex education. This education is available to all registered students. A whole-school approach to RSE is adopted. This incorporates aspects of the school ethos and organisation and enables effective pastoral support.

All schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002, the Academies Act 2010, and in anticipation of the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance 2019, such a curriculum:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Our school is committed to providing all students with a safe and stimulating environment to access a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes good behaviour and safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The Roche School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all children fulfil their potential

Statutory requirements

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education (Reception – Year 6). Schools are also required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education Policy.

Definition

RSE is taught to our pupils from Reception through to Year 6. Focus is placed on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendship, family relationships and relationships with other children and adults. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.

It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships at the appropriate time.

Principles and Values

The Roche School believes that RSE should be:

- an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- an entitlement for all young people
- encourage each student to contribute to our community and aim to support each other as they grow and learn
- set within the wider Roche School context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness
- encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. The important values are love, respect and care for each other
- generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them

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about the way these topics are delivered. The Roche School recognise that the wider community has much to offer and aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

Aims

The Roche School is committed to the teaching of relationships and sex education (RSE). It will be taught as part of our PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economics Education).

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Be developmental and be appropriate to the age and the stage of the child. Common starting points can't be assumed.

Effective relationships and sexual health education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It should not be delivered in isolation. Our RSE curriculum aims to support the ethos of the school by developing many of the core values of the Roche, particularly the values of The Roche Approach.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. The main subject areas covered are:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being Safe
- Puberty and how a baby is conceived and born

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

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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).

For more information about our curriculum, see our Curriculum Maps.

Delivery of RSE

All elements of our Relationships and Sex Education programme will be delivered in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner as part of our regular weekly timetabled PSHE education programme. RSE is delivered predominately by class teachers in mixed gender groups, other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups; this will be decided by the class teacher after discussion with the subject lead.

Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE in school, for example, a school nurse. All visitors will be familiar with and understand the school's RSE policy and be expected to work within it.

RSE is delivered across the school through the following methods:

- Direct teaching via timetabled PSHE lessons
- Through and in other subjects e.g. Computing, Religious Studies, Science and Physical Education
- Through assemblies
- Through pastoral care and guidance
- Informally through all adults on the school supporting the school ethos
- Through outside agencies/visitors

Teaching and Learning Strategies

We aim to provide an environment and atmosphere for RSE where pupils feel safe, relaxed, unintimidated and focused; where they have confidence and trust in the knowledge, skills and ability of staff in school. This ensures that both pupils and staff feel fully confident in engaging in age-appropriate discussions around potentially sensitive topics and themes.

To provide clarity and create a safe learning environment, at the beginning of each session, a set of ground rules will be agreed by the class. Ground rules are likely to follow the following basic guidelines:

- Listen politely to each other
- We share our thoughts and opinions if we want to
- Respect everyone's contribution
- No personal information – no names
- We never put anyone down

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- We are open-minded
- We follow The Roche Approach of Respect, Open-minded, Compassion, Humour, Effort

Children and teachers are free to amend and add further ground rules as appropriate to the topic of each lesson.

Other teaching and learning strategies utilised in RSE (and across the PSHE curriculum) to establish a safe learning environment include the following techniques:

- Using distancing techniques such as use of videos, role-play, case studies etc to depersonalise sensitive issues
- Anonymous question boxes. These can help children to have the confidence to ask sensitive questions and they provide an opportunity for teachers to pre-empt questions that might not be age appropriate or that might raise safeguarding or child protection concerns.
- It will be emphasised to children that any voluntary sharing of information should be anonymous (for example “someone I know...” rather than ‘I’ or naming names). Should personal questions be asked of children or staff, children will be reminded that the ground rules for RSE prohibit personal questions. Although staff may draw on their personal experiences to answer certain questions, this should be depersonalised and discussed in third person rather than first person.

Assessment

The Roche School has the same high expectations of the quality of pupils’ work in RSE as for other curriculum areas. A baseline assessment activity is given at the beginning of a new topic and revisited at the end to allow teachers to assess outcomes and consider ways of strengthening the quality of provision. This information is also used to identify pupils requiring extra support.

Further information regarding the delivery of the RSE curriculum is available in the PSHE policy.

Differentiation

The Roche School ensures that RSE is accessible for all pupils and that teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law. Lessons are planned to allow pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, to be suitably challenged. Particular attention is made when teaching pupils with SEND. If required, content will be tailored to meet the needs of SEND pupils at different developmental stages.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

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The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-science components of RSE (see section 6).

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-science components of RSE

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.

All class teachers at The Roche School are responsible for teaching RSE.

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of our professional development calendar.

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Helen Parker (PSHE coordinator) through:

- Planning scrutinies, learning walks, book looks (if applicable) etc.
- Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.
- This policy will be reviewed by Helen Parker (PSHE Coordinator) annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.

Equal Opportunities

We promote the needs and interest of all students irrespective of gender, culture, ability or aptitude. Teaching strategies will take into account the ability, age, readiness and cultural background of the pupils to ensure that all can access the full RSE education provision. We promote social learning and expect our students to show a high regard for the needs of others. RSE is a good

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vehicle for addressing both multi-cultural and gender issues and ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Specific Issues within RSE

Child Protection, reporting and confidentiality: The Roche School has a separate Safeguarding Policy. Effective Relationship and Sex Education may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff are aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns by informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff ensure that children are made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report, and how any report will be handled. This includes if they have a concern about a friend or peer.

When teaching the new subjects, the school recognises that children may raise topics including self-harm and suicide. In talking about this content in the classroom, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging or making suicide seem a more viable option for pupils and avoid material being instructive rather than preventative. Staff will take care to avoid giving instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and avoid using emotive language, videos or images.

Disclosures: If a member of staff learns that an under 16-year-old is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity the The Roche School will ensure that:

- The young person is persuaded to talk to their parent/carer
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed;
- The young person receives adequate support and information

Controversial and Sensitive Issues: Members of staff are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, whilst personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that students are able to form their own informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.

Dealing with difficult questions: We recognise that pupils will often ask staff questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for our Relationships and Sex Education. We recognise that children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to different types of questions or behaviours. As such, our teaching methods take account of these differences – including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities – and consider the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in smaller groups. Both formal and informal RSE arising from students' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the student concerned, considering each question and as case-by-case basis. Staff do not have to answer questions directly and can be addressed individually later. Staff will consider with their students what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting and the school will offer support and training in answering questions which are better not dealt with in front of a whole class. Individual teachers must refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned by a pupil's questions.

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Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+): The Roche School believes that Relationship and Sex Education should meet the needs of all students regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Teaching about LGBTQ+ will form part of our Relationships and Sex Education Programme of Study; the school will ensure that its teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate and delivered with reference to the law. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively.

Sexual Violence/Harassment and Gender stereotypes: The Roche School is alert to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and takes positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours and our school pastoral and behaviour policies aim to reinforce our values and support all pupils.

The school refers to as part of our Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy, the Department for Education’s Advice on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children. We recognise the importance of making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up. Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously; staff are aware that statistically it is more likely that females will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment than males, and that it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by males. However, males can also be the victims of sexual violence and it can also happen in same-sex relationships. However, we do not make assumptions about the behaviour of boys and young men and that they are not made to feel that this behaviour is an inevitable part of being male; we recognise that most young men are respectful of young women and each other. An understanding for all pupils of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment will help ensure that our pupils treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults.

Involvement of Parents/Carers: We recognise the vital role parents play in the development of their children’s understanding about relationships. As such, we encourage an active partnership with all parents in the development and the delivery of Relationships Education and RSE, so that parents can feel confident in the programme offered to their children.

The school works in partnership with parents to develop this policy to ensure it meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community the school serves. At an appropriate time (usually every second year), new parents will be given the opportunity to attend a presentation on the approaches used in the Relationships Education and RSE lessons. This also allows parents the opportunity to view examples of the resources the school plans to use as part of its lessons. We encourage parents to discuss what will be taught and look to address any concerns and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. We actively seek parents and pupils views on how to develop our RSE curriculum through our Thursday Talks. This can be an important opportunity to talk about how these subjects contribute to wider support in terms of pupil wellbeing and keeping children safe.

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The School prospectus and website contains additional information about:

- the RSE programme, its content and organisation;
- details of how parents can learn about the programme;
- the procedures to be followed if parents wish to withdraw their child from any or all parts of the school's sex education programme.

Parental Rights – Right to be excused from sex education – In line with [statutory guidance](#), whilst parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from all or any part of Relationships Education or Health Education, parents can request to withdraw their children from any or all parts of the school's programme of Sex Education, other than those elements which are required by the National Curriculum. It is realised that, under exceptional circumstances, a very small number of parents may wish to exclude their children from this programme. If parents have requested that their child be withdrawn from an aspect of Sex Education, the Headteacher or PHSE Coordinator will meet with parents to discuss the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parent proposes to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

The Roche School believes that all children should be offered the opportunity of receiving an appropriate, comprehensive and wellplanned programme of Relationships and Sex Education in accordance with the law and government policy. Relationships and Sex education is taught, in part, through Science lessons in accordance with the National Curriculum. All children at The Roche School have a basic entitlement to information about the human life cycle and reproduction, which is covered in the science curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw children from this provision which forms the basis for understanding the nature of life itself.

Links to Other Policies

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education Policy
- Science Policy

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