

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy



Executive Summary

Effective Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is essential if our pupils are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about how they conduct their lives. It contributes to promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, mental and physical development, preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

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1. Policy Aims

Eastbourne College believes that RSE is an educational entitlement of all pupils and an integral part of each pupil's journey into adulthood. We aim, in partnership with parents, to encourage.

- Personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour
- Self-esteem and emotional wellbeing
- Respect and consideration for others
- Provide support and information for young people and their families.

- Provide empowerment into adulthood so that pupils can thrive and be the best they can be with the information they need.

2. Definitions

Relationship and Sex Education at Eastbourne College is part of lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just the intimate relationships. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that gives pupils the confidence to make sound decisions when facing risks and other challenges. It includes teaching about friendships, the importance of caring, stable and mutually supportive relationships with another person and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship. 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 relationships can be managed. We recognise that to be human is to experience sexual feelings, seek connections with other people and develop relationships which may be physical or non-physical.

Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches children and young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others, to build body confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity so that they can develop safe, fulfilling sexual relationships at the appropriate time. It should teach young people to understand sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

RSE will outline that there are different types of committed, stable relationships, the characteristics and legal status of the types of long-term relationships, the importance of why they must be freely entered into and how to judge when relationships have become unsafe as well as how to seek help or advice and report concerns about others.

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed, and healthy choices as they progress through to adult life. This should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Many teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

3. Equal Opportunities

This policy has due regard for the Equality Act. For example, our teaching of sex and relationship education is applicable to all sexual orientations and will include teaching aspects of sex and sexual health. At Eastbourne College, RSE seeks to enable young people to feel positive about themselves, to manage relationships and access the infrastructure of support available via teachers and other appropriate adults. It is also a key means through which we promote Fundamental British Values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance with those with different faiths and beliefs) such as tolerance and acceptance of other sexualities. RSE and health education provides a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity or personal, social, and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the schools' behaviour policy.

4. Implementation and Curriculum

Through this aspect of our curriculum, we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions regarding RSE and health education.

By intention, RSE delivered is not delivered in isolation, but firmly rooted in our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme. This is also supplemented by the pastoral curriculum revisiting themes and current issues in assemblies, house discussions, tutor groups and Chapel.

Eastbourne College wishes to promote pupils' health and wellbeing by encouraging self-control, their ability to self-regulate and strategies for doing so. This will enable pupils to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks and challenges. Eastbourne College believes that an integrated approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing will have a positive impact on behaviour and attainment.

In agreement with the statutory legislation (Children from the age of 11 years upwards are to be taught RSE along with health education from 2020).

The Relationships and Sex Education programme will seek to develop pupils' personal and social skills as well as their **attitudes and values** alongside the **knowledge and understanding** elements.

This will include:

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- the value of family life, and stable and loving relationships,
- learning the value of respect, love and care.
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making (for example, understanding the impact of an online world has on healthy relationships, exploring the issue and effects of online pornography).

Pupils will learn to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice, developing self-respect and empathy for others, and developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.

We will provide our pupils with an age appropriate RSE programme that is tailored to their physical and emotional maturity. It should enable them to make positive choices about their sexual and emotional health in the future.

Through our RSE and PSHE programme, the education of our pupils will include the following-

- Love, relationships, and sexuality
- Sex and the responsibilities of parenthood
- The argument for delaying sexual intercourse.
- Building self-esteem and mental health and the impact of aspects such as Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Different types of contraception, where to get it and safe sex.
- The law surrounding consent, sexual intercourse, marriage, sexual harassment, assault, rape.
- Sexual orientation and gender identity
- Sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, FGM.
- Biological aspects such as puberty, menstruation
- Abortion

The outcomes for our pupils at Eastbourne College include enabling them:

- To develop full responsibility for their own behaviour and the ability to take effective action when they experience inappropriate behaviour which affects themselves or their peers.
- To enable young people to understand the biological facts related to human growth and development including reproduction and contraception.
- To enable young people to understand human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, the nature of feelings and emotions experienced by themselves and others, and the importance of healthy personal relationships.
- To develop an understanding of and sensitivity to different lifestyles, needs and feelings of others.
- To help young people to identify and enable them to use sources of help and advice available within the family, school and community.
- To assist young people in making informed decisions about their sexual behaviour and the consequences of behaviour which carry risks.
- To encourage exploration of values and moral issues particularly the value of family life in its many different contexts.
- To know and understand the legal framework relating to sexual activity.
- To foster a range of personal skills and qualities such as communication, decision making, negotiation, assertion and self-esteem which will enhance the young people's ability to lead sexually fulfilling and healthy lives.
- To enable young people to appreciate how their decisions over sexual behaviour contribute to their personal identity and integrity.

Pupil-centred, participatory approaches are essential if pupils are to consider values, attitudes and behaviour. Whilst specific knowledge may be transmitted through didactic teaching methods much of the teaching programme will be based upon the active involvement of pupils.

The teacher will generate a teaching environment in which pupils feel able to discuss sensitive issues without embarrassment and will respond to each other sensitively with a considerate and tolerant approach. Within each classroom the negotiation of 'ground rules' as to what is acceptable will help to create a suitable environment. Care should be taken to make explicit the importance of confidentiality and the limits of any such confidentiality negotiated within the class.

The personal privacy of young people should be respected and all pupils should have the right to withhold their opinion or experiences with regard to a topic that is particularly sensitive for them.

The organisation of RSE is no different from other curriculum areas. It is delivered through planned programmes within PSHE based on a spiral curriculum going from year 9 through to year 13.

Normally, male and female pupils will be taught together. However, when deemed appropriate, there may be occasions when students are taught in separate gender groups, for example the medical centre talks on sexual education to year 10 is done in houses (therefore single sex groups).

Specifics are included in the PSHE scheme of work but here is a brief summary of the RSE content for each year group.

5. RSE Content in year groups

Pupils are encouraged to develop the following skills:

- Honest communication including managing relationships.
- Assertiveness
- Informed decision making
- Recognising and using opportunities to develop safe and healthy lifestyles.

Year 9

(1 PSHE lesson every week)

Topics include:

Healthy Relationships, Different types of relationships, Consent and communication / assertiveness, Choosing to start a family, Safer sex – contraception and condom demonstrator, STIs, Making Choices, Self-esteem, Online relationships.

Year 10

(1 lesson every week but 3 lesson blocks done in a rotation so that all areas of the PSHE curriculum are covered)

Topics include:

Consent, Pornography, Sexting and unhealthy relationships, body image, Negotiating skills.

Year 11

(1 lesson every 2 weeks, pupils rotate different topics so that by the end of the year all topics have been covered)

Aims of lessons:

To get pupils to think about the importance of healthy relationships, communication, to understand consent (verbal and non-verbal cues) and to be able to talk about pornography.

Year 12

(1 lesson every 2 weeks, pupils rotate topics so that by the end of the year all topics have been covered)

Aims of lessons:

To explore core values and emotions in relation to sexuality. Learn how to effectively communicate wants and needs with a partner. Everyone has the right to be in a healthy relationship. To understand what consent is and its importance in a relationship. To have the opportunity to talk about scenarios / where to get help in and out of school.

Year 13

(1 lesson every 2 weeks in the Michaelmas Term)

Aims of lessons:

Reinforcing the core values and emotions in relation to sexuality. Learn how to effectively communicate wants and needs with a partner. Everyone has the right to be in a healthy relationship. To understand what consent is and its importance in a relationship. To have the opportunity to talk about scenarios / where to get help in and out of school / first year at university.

All staff are responsible for promoting appropriate values and behaviours across all areas. Those responsible for specific delivery of RSE will be supported with age-appropriate lesson plans and resources and are reminded about professionalism and confidentiality and PSHE classroom ground rules.

We engage in the services of external speakers to present to pupils on some of the RSE topics to support our PSHE programme.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of PSHE is responsible with support from SMT to co-ordinating RSE as part of the PSHE programme. Staff are supported to deliver RSE through training.

6. Withdrawal from RSE

Opportunities exist throughout the statutory curriculum to provide RSE. In the event of any parent, carer or guardian wishing to withdraw their child from Sex Education lessons they are asked to inform the Headmaster in writing. Once discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should 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, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. Before withdrawing or making a request, Eastbourne College urges parents to carefully consider their decisions as sex education is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and wellbeing. Note parents only have the right to withdraw their child from sex education, not the relationship part.

7. Safeguarding and confidentiality

We recognise that schools can play an important role in preventative education in respect of safeguarding and sexual violence and sexual harassment. The College's RSE provision is part of a whole school approach to safeguarding.

We hope to provide a safe and supportive Eastbourne College community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers. It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case the school's child protection and safeguarding procedure will be followed.

8. Monitoring, review and evaluation.

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressure and economic change RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we review the RSE curriculum yearly. Guidance from the PSHE Association and DFEE as well as pupil voice and feedback help with this process.

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social, and emotional development including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school's ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

This policy is constantly being reviewed and updated in addition to a standard biennial review interval. Parents have been consulted in its development dating back to 2019. The most recent invitation for parents to engage with its development was in summer 2023. It is designed by the Head of PSHE with oversight from SMT. Governors have a range of responsibilities outlined in external references stated below.

References

Internal

- [British Values Policy](#)
- [Curriculum Policy](#)
- [Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy](#)
- Provision for Pupils with Particular Religious, Dietary, Language and Cultural Needs
- [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

External

- [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#)
- [Personal, social, health and economic \(PSHE\) education](#)
- [The Independent School Standards Guidance for independent schools](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: guidance](#)
- [Teacher training: internet safety and harms](#)
- [Teacher training: online relationships and media](#)
- [Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum](#)
- [Gender separation in mixed schools](#)

Policy Owner(s)



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