Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

The Governing Body of Riverside School
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APPENDIX:

1. **What students should know by the end of primary and secondary school (DfE *'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education'* (September 2020).**

Introduction

This policy covers Riverside School's approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) as set out in the **DfE *'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education', September 2020***, which became compulsory from September 2021. The Department for Education (DfE) updated statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE), coming into full force on **1 September 2026.**

At Riverside Health Education (e.g., drugs and alcohol) is primarily taught through the school's PSHE programme, although in RSHE keeping healthy in this context is included.

Parents are informed about the RSHE policy as part of the admission process. It is referenced in the annual School Offer and published on the school website. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss the policy at school-based parent forums and reviews. It is intended that this report is written in an accessible way for the whole of the school community. A hard copy of the policy is always available for inspection by parents on request.

Rationale

As set out in the DfE guidance RSHE begins with learning about healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships in all contexts, including online. This sits alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary school level students' further understanding of health is developed, as well as their knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental and emotional wellbeing is central to these subjects. Working alongside health professionals at Riverside we are able to identify the universal entitlement of students to learning that will enable them to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives as well as ensuring that they are protected at all times from relationship-led or sexual harm.

RSE in secondary school gives young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It enables young people 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. RSE covers contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It teaches what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils to 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.

RSE is an integral element of a broader personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme.

It is compulsory for secondary schools to teach Relationships and Sex Education from September 2020.

Other signposted publications

Other publications which have informed the policy are listed below. *(All are readily available for reference and scrutiny in school in the 'Child Protection' section of the 'Policies and Procedures' folders):*

• *Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance, updated annually)*

• *Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)*

• *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)*

• *Equality Act 2010 and schools*

• *SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)*

• *Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)*

• *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)*

• *statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education and the Sex Education Forum policy guidance.*

It is compulsory for all secondary schools to teach RSE from September 2020. Relationships Education forms part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education, and is a key aspect of our role as a Healthy School which we are currently [working towards/Bronze award/Silver award/Gold award].

We are committed to being an inclusive school, and comply with the relevant requirements of The Equality Act 2010, with particular attention to the public sector Equality Duty. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics).

RSE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. Schools have a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18 in schools and colleges (Keeping children safe in education)

RSE also contributes to our policies on confidentiality, bullying, emotional wellbeing and equalities.

• *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)*

• *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)*

• *The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)*

• *Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC)*

• *SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).*

• *National Citizen Service guidance for schools*

Policy links

Our RSHE programme complements school policies for:

- PSHE
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- E-Safety
- Communication
- Assessment
- Flexibility of Thought
- Autism

Our values

Whilst the values of our RSHE curriculum are underpinned by a promotion of the importance of stable relationships, and family life, they are closely linked to the overall values of the school which promote the development of self-esteem, independence skills and an enthusiastic attitude to life and learning.

We will always ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by being sensitive to a range of views whilst at the same time accessing learning which ensures that they stay safe, healthy and where possible understand their rights.

Accordingly, we provide a culture, opportunities and forums for students to be able to discuss LGBT, (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender), or other sexual identity matters as appropriate to their needs at a timely point in students' lives. When appropriate we will encourage critical thinking and decision-making and challenge myths, misconceptions and prejudices should they arise. We will not encourage early sexual experimentation.

Working with parents

Riverside School values the importance of collaboration between school and home. We are committed to working with parents. We will offer (where appropriate) advice and materials designed to support the student's RSHE learning. Parents are encouraged to discuss key issues and ongoing concerns with school staff, at parents' evenings and other parental forums. We will notify parents when particular aspects of the RSHE curriculum will be taught helping prepare them for questions and changing behaviour.

We will communicate with parents about their right to withdraw their children from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. Some parents prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education.~~.~~ After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. If parents request removal from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE the school will provide alternative support. Parents can exercise this right by requesting a meeting with the headteacher to confirm arrangements by phoning or emailing the school. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education.

We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with parents/carers through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. We will therefore:

• Inform when certain topics will be taught (Each term we publish the Curriculum mapping and Class Timetables); inviting parents/carers to view the resources used; answer queries on what students will be learning; encourage parents/carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy.

Aims

The aims of the RSHE programme closely mirror the aims of the broader PSHE curriculum:

- to help all students develop as individuals in a wider society
- to understand their relationships with others
- to understand themselves physically, emotionally, socially and sexually

Learning about relationships and sex should be:

- an integral part of the lifelong learning process, with agreed aspects beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout adult life
- an entitlement for all boys as well as girls;
- those who are heterosexual or LGBT;
- those with physical, learning or emotional difficulties; and those with a religious or faith tradition
- everyone whatever their background, community or circumstance
- provided within a holistic context of emotional and social development throughout the school community

At Riverside we are statutorily required to explore lifestyle choices our students may wish to make and, having made those choices we are required to develop appropriate language, strategies and skills that they may need to stay healthy and safe. The diversity of the needs in the school, coupled with the additional vulnerability of our students mean the range of learning experiences should include:

- laying foundations of understanding about growth and change and respect for others
- preparation for the changes of puberty, including menstruation (the onset of which can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared).
- body knowledge
- understanding about sexual health, managing fertility and avoiding infection (as appropriate to the individual students'

Through teaching RSE, we aim to equip children with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, and to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing. Quality RSE promotes the core values of respect, love and care. It also provides the opportunity for young people to reflect on their own attitudes and beliefs and those of their peers and others.

It aims to teach young people about:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate sexual relationships, including sexual health

Objectives

The learning objectives are:

- to be able to make choices and decisions
- to develop personal autonomy
- to demonstrate appropriate levels of responsibility and control over their lives
- to make a difference or make changes by their individual or collective actions
- to develop a range of self-help and independence skills

The overarching principle of the learning outcomes will be that students will:

- know and understand the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber bullying)
- be able to interact with peers and adults in a respectful, appropriate and safe way
- understand that they have a right to learn, to be heard and to be kept safe
- understand that they have a responsibility to listen and to respect others at all times

Student engagement

We will ensure equality of the RSHE policy by being sensitive to the differing needs of students and by ensuring that the opportunity to evolve and adapt over time is built into the process, including listening to students and encouraging their voice. Using adapted resources, visual aids, social stories and specific lesson design teachers will ensure that RSHE content is adapted for different learning needs and abilities.

RSHE curriculum

All students are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets their individual learning needs and promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development.

The teaching of RSHE enhances learning by offering a range of opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of different types of relationships, their own emotions and the changes that they will experience as they grow up and become adults.

Using the curriculum mapping for RSHE we will directly involve students by teaching a high-quality integrated programme that responds to many of the key issues associated with puberty, adolescence and becoming an adult. However, this approach may often require a closer examination of individual and group needs. This might include RSHE being taught to same-gender groups.

Science curriculum

National Curriculum science in secondary school covers reproduction in humans including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth which includes the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.

RSHE programme outline

Our programme covers:

- the law (see separate section)
- equality in relationships
- sexual consent
- the importance of seeking and gaining mutual consent through positive and active communication, and go beyond teaching how to say ‘no’
- students will be taught how to identify behaviour in a relationship which is positive and supportive and that which is exploitative and controlling.
- understanding the impact of a culture that reinforces stereotyped and gendered expectations for both boys and girls, including blaming victims for the abuse they experience and other cultural norms and negative stereotypes that they experience and observe.

- the skills for negotiating consent and managing the feelings associated with their experiences, and how to seek help and support if they need it
- relevant visual cues and role play
- learning that one's body belongs to oneself and that only we can say who has access to it. (i.e., 'public and private'). This is a key element in a school's approach to safeguarding.

- respecting boundaries (public and private) – their own and other people's – helps children to understand the need to obtain consent and that everyone has the right to offer or withhold their consent for any activity, sexual or otherwise
- learning the correct biological/medical names for the genitalia and reproductive organs. Having the right language to describe the private parts of their body – and knowing how to seek help if they are being abused – are vital for safeguarding
- opportunities for students to discuss and explore sexual orientation choices in a safe environment; LGBT+, heterosexual or questioning in terms of those exploring their sexual identity.
- being open and honest about the words for genitalia will support girls at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM).

Responsibility for teaching RSHE

PSHE/RSHE Curriculum Leads have overall responsibility for RSHE curriculum planning within their teams, the RSHE curriculum is delivered by class teachers. PSHE/RSHE Curriculum Leads will be responsible for ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning remains high, and teachers are offered support where necessary. All of those who deliver RSHE will regularly update their knowledge and expertise incorporating the support of other professionals including the school nurse, local sexual health services, and safeguarding professionals

Following advice and guidance from the school's Team Leaders, the school will buy into any suitable recommended visiting projects that can help each team's students with their Relationships and Sex Education. These may include theatre and role-play projects such as Sex FM. Whenever possible, engagement with the projects are also offered to Mulberry at Woodside for joint working.

Any RSHE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson.

When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules 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 students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time. When students who have been withdrawn from the sex education element of RSE sessions asks questions dialogue will always happen with parents/carers.

For many students at Riverside verbally delivered lessons would not be an appropriate teaching and learning method. These students learn through teachers' skilled use of alternative means of communication such as Makaton, PODD ALDs, Symbols, objects of reference, AAC (Augmented Alternative Communication), gesture and touch. Teachers will consider pacing and repetition by including structured plans for repetition and overlearning to reinforce key concepts.

In terms of keeping safe, these students specifically require a particularly high level of staff vigilance since they may not have the capacity to understand concepts such as keeping safe e.g. CSE and FGM.

Some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships, Sex and Health Education is a particularly important subject for many of our students.

There is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of students at different developmental stages. As with all teaching, but particularly for RSHE, we ensure that our teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate.

Assessment of RSHE

We will ensure that all of our students have equal access to the RSHE programme by respecting students' unique starting points and providing differentiated learning that takes into consideration different abilities, developmental stages, levels of maturity and personal circumstances.

Students' development and progress in RSHE is measured and recorded by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. We will assess students' learning through revisiting baseline data and through teacher observation noting changes of peer interaction, behaviour, awareness and attitudes. There may be direct links between RSHE Curriculum content and EHCP OUTCOMES, in this case teachers will ensure that monitoring and recording of progress is fed into the Annual Review cycle.

Monitoring and evaluation of RSHE

- Planning scrutiny
- Learning walks
- Drop-in sessions for staff to share information/ask questions
- Moderation of student progress

It is the responsibility of the Team Leaders to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of RSHE in their team, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

Governors are responsible for reviewing the revision of the Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy on a biennial basis.

Training

- Staff will be trained on the delivery of RSHE though collaborative planning and teaching within their Teams, with support from their Team Leader and RSHE curriculum lead teacher. The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school such as school nurses or sexual health professionals to provide support and training where necessary.

Cross-curricular links

The programme is committed to relevant learning across the curriculum including links with Citizenship or Religious Education on matters such as abortion and same-sex relationships.

There are direct links with the ICT/Computing curriculum raising awareness of the personal risks associated with the use of technology, including emotional and physical wellbeing, safety and protecting a personal reputation as well as exploring the law as it pertains to downloading of images and information and exploring safe ways of sharing personal information, social networking, online dating and sharing images, *(see e-Safety Policy).*

Safeguarding

If we have any reason to believe a student is at risk, in response to information arising from RSHE lessons, we are required by law to refer the matter to the school's DSLs, (Designated Safeguarding Leads), who will take over the management of the process.

Confidentiality / controversial and sensitive issues

The school cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. In any case where safeguarding procedures are followed, the school will ensure that the young person understands, that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first. Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student.

The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships.

There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- gambling and gaming
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

How this policy was produced:

This policy was produced by:

- Consultations with students by student voice in assemblies and through School council meetings
- Consultations with parents/carers by face to face meetings and surveys
- Consultations with staff by face to face meetings and surveys
- Consultations with governors during meetings

Revision of policy and oversight of the delivery of the RSHE programme by Kelly Whiting, deputy headteacher,

APPENDIX A

What students should know by the end of primary and secondary school (DfE) *'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education'* September 2020).

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me. Pupils should know

• that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security, and stability.

• the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.

• that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

• that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.

• that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.

• how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships. Pupils should know

• how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.

• the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.

• that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.

• that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.

• how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships. Pupils should know

• the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.

• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.

• the conventions of courtesy and manners.

• the importance of self- -respect and how this links to their own happiness.

• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.

• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.

• what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, or destructive.

• the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers, and adults.

Online relationships. Pupils should know

• that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.

• that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.

• the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content, and contact, and how to report them.

• how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.

• how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe. Pupils should know

• what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).

• about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.

• that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.

• how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.

• how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
• how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard,

• how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. • where to get advice e.g., family, school and/or other sources.

By the end of secondary school:

Families. Pupils should know

• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.

• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.

• what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.

• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered.

• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.

• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.

• how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed. Respectful relationships, including friendships

Respectful relationships, including friendships. Pupils should know

• the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.

• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.

• how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g., how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).

• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.

• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.

• that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.

• what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

• the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and media. Pupils should know

• their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.

• about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.

• not to provide material to others that they would not want shared and used online.

Being safe. Pupils should know

• the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.

• how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online). Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health Pupils should know

• how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.

• that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g., physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.

• that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure, and not pressurising others.

• that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.

• the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy, and options available.

• the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.

• that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).

• how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.

• about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.

• how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.

• how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.