

Alderbrook's RSE statement

RSE is Relationships and Sex Education. RSE concerns the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

RSE is taught within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. The biological aspects of RSE are taught in Science lessons and some aspects are included in the Religious Education curriculum. The majority of RSE is taught as part of each student's once per fortnight PSHE lesson : a third of these are RSE-themed. This programme is further enriched by occasional year-group assemblies and on three Life Ready Days where external visitors often support the teaching.

Other subjects, along with the pastoral system and the positive ethos of the school, make a valuable contribution to the learning of our students. The more specific contribution of subjects across the curriculum, has been mapped across the PSHE programme so that the wider contribution, particularly to Health and Relationships aspects of the programme is recognised.

The aims of RSE at Alderbrook School are to:

- To develop a sense of kindness, care and mutual respect for others.
- To increase young peoples' self-esteem and self-respect.
- To dispel myths and increase understanding and provide accurate information about sex related issues.
- To create a positive culture around issues of relationships and sexuality, helping young people to develop healthier behaviours.
- To develop personal, social and emotional skills relevant to all relationships e.g. communication, risk assessment and management, managing relationships, decision making, assertiveness, conflict management, helping others, seeking help and advice and using services.

Values and Inclusivity

The RSE programme is planned to provide students with the knowledge they need to play a full part in society as responsible citizens, equipping them for a safe and happy future. There is due regard to the values of family life, within the context of a diverse and inclusive society.

The programme is progressive and designed for age appropriate teaching. Teachers should also be aware of the physical and emotional maturity of their classes, and the special educational needs and disabilities of their students. Teachers will be supported to differentiate their teaching as appropriate.

The teaching of RSE is framed within the school values of ambition, bravery and kindness. This supports the wider PSHE curriculum in helping to foster students' emotional and physical wellbeing, and development of character that are fundamental to students being happy, successful and productive members of society.

Up to date, correct information, based upon the age, maturity and needs of groups and individuals must be used to enable children and young people to stay safe and make informed choices and decisions.

Key Principles

Kindness

- Negotiated ground-rules will ensure that the climate for learning is respectful of individuals/groups and their opinions, beliefs and choices.
- Fulfilling relationships are based upon love, care, empathy and mutual respect.
- Questions will be responded to with care, attention and thought.
- In caring for our students, networks of support inside and outside of school are clearly identified and the information is readily available at all times.

Rights and Responsibilities

- Students will be taught about the laws in relation to all aspects of RSE.
- All students have the right to be given up to date, correct information in response to any questions that they may ask.
- We all have the responsibility to keep others, and ourselves physically and emotionally safe within our relationships.

Safety and Trust

- RSE will always be delivered within a safe learning environment, underpinned by negotiated ground-rules.
- Safety of oneself and others within relationships will always be promoted, including safe sexual practice and assessment and management of risk
- Students will be given opportunities to consider people they can trust to give them support (e.g. parents, staff, and young people's health clinics).
- School staff (including the First Aid coordinator) can never guarantee confidentiality and may have to refer issues where students are at risk (see Child Protection Policy).
- The school nurse can offer confidentiality to students on a one to one basis.
- The 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).

Confidentiality

- All schools are required by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to 'promote the well-being of students at the school'. We are committed to the well-being of our students therefore actively signpost confidential support services that can be accessed by our students.

- In the classroom, the aim is to strike a balance between helping students to feel respected, safe and able to participate fully and openly while still protecting privacy and safeguarding welfare.
- Effective teaching and learning in PSHE / RSE actively encourages students to share thoughts and voice opinions, so it is important to establish boundaries and clarify with students at the outset what will happen to any personal information they might disclose in the classroom.
- Within school, the following protocols must be followed:
 - Staff should never promise unconditional or absolute confidentiality
 - It should be made explicit to students that staff have a duty to protect young people from serious harm. In such circumstances, staff will need to talk to another external professional about a disclosure. In the first instance, names should not be shared with external professionals in order to maintain confidentiality.
 - Sharing information without consent is only recommended if it is in the child's best interests to do so and there is a clear risk of significant harm to the young person or to others.' Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
 - There is no legal requirement to report sexual activity between 13-15 year olds. Although the age of consent remains at 16, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 was never intended to criminalise sexual activity between consenting young people of this age.
 - All disclosures of sexual activity involving students in Year 7-11 must be discussed with the DSL for Child Protection. Sexual activity involving 16-17 year olds is unlikely to involve an offence. Discussion with the DSL and subsequent action may be appropriate if staff suspect significant harm or the risk of serious harm.
 - It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a student if they hold a position of trust or authority in relationship to them.

Parental Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from aspects of sex education that go beyond statutory National Curriculum orders for Science, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. Parental views and rights will always be respected. Any parents who wish to discuss the possibility of withdrawal from RSE are asked, in the first instance, to contact the Head Teacher. The RSE Co-ordinator is happy to discuss aspects of our RSE provision with parents or carers.

Where students are withdrawn from planned RSE, they will be accommodated in an alternative venue. However, they may not be withdrawn from other lessons or areas of school life where discussion around relationships and sex education could arise spontaneously.