



C7: Relationships and Sex Education Policy

This policy is to provide an outline for the use of governors, teachers and parents.

It is based on the Statutory Guidance from the government which can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

It is a statutory requirement to provide RSE. This policy is based on the guidance contained in the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance from the government and is built with the support of the Swindon Healthy Schools team.

Rationale:

Our students are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. The RSE content will support the wider work of the school to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that are fundamental to students being happy, successful and productive members of society. The aim of relationship and sex education (RSE) at The Commonwealth School is to help support students through their physical, emotional and moral development.

We believe that effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. At The Commonwealth School it is presented within a moral and ethical framework and with the clear intention of promoting sensitivity, tolerance, safety and responsibility. Young people need to learn to respect themselves and others as they move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Aims:

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 intimate relationships.

It is our aim that ALL STUDENTS at our school shall be provided with a RSE programme which is progressive and takes into account the needs of each age group and level of maturity. RSE and Health Education will be accessible for all pupils, and will be inclusive.

The Statutory Guidelines identify the following key areas of RSE education:

1. Families
2. Respectful relationships, including friendships
3. Online and Media
4. Being Safe
5. Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

The Statutory Guidelines identify the following key areas of Physical and Mental Wellbeing:

6. Mental wellbeing
7. Internet safety and harms
8. Physical health and fitness
9. Healthy eating
10. Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
11. Health and prevention
12. Basic first aid
13. Changing adolescent body

Within the Commonweal context we aim to

- Teach students about sex, sexuality and sexual health. To help children and young people appreciate the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.
- Teach students how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships including self-respect, respect for others, commitment, tolerance and consent and how to manage conflict and recognise unhealthy relationships.
- Teach students about relationships and responsibilities (moral and legal) including reference to online safety and social media.
- Issues of religion, cultural difference and ethnicity will be dealt with sensitively. Specifically, an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance will be encouraged.
- Address the needs of vulnerable students individually and with experts or parents with appropriate consent.
- Enable pupils to recognise the physical, social and emotional implications of sexual behaviour and to recognise that responsibilities in relationships are shared by every individual.
- Inform students how relationships may affect health and wellbeing including mental health.

Curriculum:

At Commonweal the main aspects of Relationships, Sex and Health Education are taught through the Social Science Curriculum where time will be allowed for exploration of ideas and full discussion.

Some elements of RSE and Health Education are taught through Science lessons, Computing lessons, Catering and P.E. lessons

Further details of how we meet the Government Statutory framework can be found in our RSE audit.

Staff:

The team involved should be trained in the skills needed for implementing an effective relationships and sex education programme. All staff, whether directly involved or not, should be aware of the aims of the programme.

Teaching staff will be permitted to answer questions openly and honestly as they arise - whatever the situation. Teachers will not offer direct advice on areas of contraception, except where to seek help or people to speak to for guidance e.g. school nurse, doctor, parents.

Staff need to be aware that effective relationships and sex education brings an understanding of what is and what is not acceptable in relationships. This could lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case and they suspect a student is a victim of abuse or they have reason to believe there is a risk of abuse, they should contact the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff must also be mindful of the problems relating to confidentiality and should never promise to keep information a secret. Teaching staff should highlight services where students can get confidential support.

Outside Support:

We believe in involving outside support in order to enrich the programme. They will be known to, and valued by, the school and will be asked to work together with members of the teaching staff in a team-teaching situation, as we believe this maximises their expertise.

Feeder Schools:

It is our policy to liaise with the feeder schools to develop an awareness of their sex education programme. Our main feeder schools use the Jigsaw scheme of work.

Ethos:

The school creates a caring and supportive community which values relationships, equal opportunities, confidence and self-esteem, and is supported by all staff. It is within this context that the sex education programme is delivered.

Partnership with Parents/Carers:

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents will be supported to understand the purpose and content of our RSE curriculum through communications and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach. The pastoral team are also available to support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. Information on RSE in the school curriculum is contained in the curriculum section on the school website and the RSE policy is available on the school website.

Parents are encouraged to discuss at any time the content and delivery of the RSE programme with the Head of Global Learning and let them know by email if they have any concerns about their child being taught RSE

The right to withdraw a student:

Parents/carers of all pupils are informed of the content of the RSE offer at Commonweal.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE apart from the statutory content in the National Curriculum Science. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Process:

- Before granting any such request, the parents will meet with the head teacher, or their representative, to discuss the request and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.
- This request will be documented to ensure a record is kept.

- Once those 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 can make arrangements to provide the child with sex education.
- This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.
- If a pupil is excused from sex education, we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding:

All students, staff and other adults delivering RSE will be made aware that complete secrecy can never be promised to a student, though information given in confidence will only if necessary be disclosed to anyone else. It may be appropriate to refer a student to an outside agency.

- Clear links to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and reassurance provided that those procedures will be followed.
- Reassurance for students that they will be informed if confidentiality is to be broken and that they will be offered access to confidential support and information.
- Encouragement for students to talk to parents/carers.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

This policy shall be reviewed at least every three years, or before that time when considered appropriate by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or governors.

The Governors welcome comments on this matter from all interested parties which will lead to the development of a more effective sex education programme.