



Pontypridd High School

Relationships and Sexuality Education

*'Learning and achieving together'
'Dysgu a chyflawni gyda'n gilydd'*



Relationships and Sexuality Policy

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Member of staff responsible:	Leader of Learning and Teaching
Committee Responsible:	Learning and Teaching

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Introductory Statement

This policy covers the Pontypridd Cluster whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). As a cluster, we believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being. Pontypridd Cluster schools believe that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSE. We believe that through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our schools and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.

This policy was produced in consultation with our staff, board of governors, pupils and parents. We will ensure the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents, including publishing the policy on our school websites.

Aims of Relationships and Sexuality Education

Pontypridd High School is fully inclusive which means that we use a wholeschool, strategic approach to fully include and respond to the needs of all our learners and families.

- RSE has a positive and empowering role in learners' education and is vital in supporting them to realise the Four purposes as part of a whole-school approach.
- Our RSE curriculum enables learners to form and maintain a range of relationships, all based on mutual trust and respect. This is the foundation of RSE at our school.
- Good quality RSE empowers learners to make responsible, well-informed decisions and be able to understand themselves and others.
- Our RSE Curriculum seeks to equip learners to challenge harmful stereotypes and perceptions and be able to seek help and support.
- Good quality RSE is positive, protective and preventative and underpinned by a needed, rights-based approach which takes a positive view of human sexuality and relationships.

Legislation - Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Code

RSE is a mandatory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales for all learners from age 3 to 16 (RSE Code). This means that all learners must receive this education. There is no right to withdraw from RSE in the new curriculum. The Code sets out the themes and matters that must be incorporated into our RSE approach.

This policy complies with our statutory obligations to deliver RSE under the RSE Code. We will review the policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme continues to meet the needs of our pupils.

Related Policies

The Policy should be read in conjunction with:

The School's Aims and Ethos
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Complaints Policy
Accessibility Plan
E-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy
Home-School Agreement
Equal Opportunities Policy

Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Effective and high-quality Relationships and Sexuality Education [RSE] will help ensure children and young people experience their rights under the UNCRC, including:

- the right to non-discrimination (Article 2)
- the right to be heard, express opinions and be involved in decision-making (Article 12);
- the right to access information that will allow children to make decisions about health (Article 17)
- the right to experience the highest attainable health, access to health facilities, preventative health care, and family planning education and services (Article 24)
- the right to an education that support all children to develop and reach their full potential and prepare children to be understanding and tolerant to others (Article 29)
- The right to government protection from sexual abuse and exploitation (Article 34).

The law is just one of the changes needed to make sure that children and young people do receive this important, human-rights based education. There must also be professional learning to support teachers to plan effective and developmentally-appropriate RSE. This must all be supported by clear guidance that sets out appropriate learning for children at different stages. There also needs to be lots of new resources that professionals can draw upon to work with young people and their school community to develop learning.

Responsibilities for RSE

In line with a Whole-School Approach, RSE is everyone's responsibility at Pontypridd High School. However, the Governing Body, Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, and RSE Lead have specific roles to ensure the successful implementation of RSE and a safe environment for all learners.

Role of the School/Provision Governing Body

The role of the Governing Body at Pontypridd High School is to:

- Determine and authorise RSE Policy, ensuring it is compliant with the Statutory Requirements outlined in the RSE Code.
- Ensure the RSE Policy is up to date and reviewed regularly (every two years).
- Ensure the RSE Policy is disseminated throughout the whole school community through established communication channels

Role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team at Pontypridd High School is to:

- Co-ordinate the formulation of the RSE Policy by involving all relevant stakeholders.
- Allocate a named member of staff to lead on RSE
- Inform all staff and adults involved with the delivery of RSE within the school of the contents of the policy and its implications to them as providers.
- Assess the Continued Professional Development needs of school staff involved with the programme and seek to respond to these needs with suitable professional training.
- Provide support to the RSE Lead where appropriate, including supporting any questions from parents/carers.
- Determine and allocate funding allowance for RSE Curriculum to support resources/professional training/external organisations costs.
- When the RSE Policy is reviewed, learners, teachers, governors, families, and outside agencies (where applicable) will be consulted to ensure it is effective and meeting statutory requirements.

Role of the RSE Lead

The role of the RSE Lead at Pontypridd High School is to:

- Develop and implement a developmentally appropriate RSE Curriculum for all learners, in line with the statutory requirements outlined in the RSE Code.
- Monitor and evaluate RSE in conjunction with other subject leaders to ensure that RSE is integrated effectively across all Areas of Learning Experience (AoLE).
- Secondary School/Provision only: Liaise and make appropriate links with feeder schools to ensure continuity and development.
- Monitor and evaluate the scheme of work and the suitability of resources.
- Ensure pupil voice is reflected within the RSE Curriculum.
- Liaise with outside agencies and co-ordinate their involvement with the RSE programme where appropriate.
- Liaise with parents / carers where needed regarding RSE Curriculum.
- Liaise with the Local Authority and Healthy Schools Team.

- Offering support to parents/carers in talking to their children about RSE and how to link this with what is being taught at school.
- The RSE Curriculum will be monitored and evaluated by the RSE Lead (suggested annually) to ensure that it remains relevant, up to date and is meeting the needs of all learners.

Curriculum for Wales – Curriculum Content

RSE will play an important part in delivering on the Curriculum's aspirations. The Pontypridd Cluster approach has been designed to outline core learning at **developmentally-appropriate phases**, introducing the learning sensitively, providing detail for schools and settings on what should be taught and when.

Three vital questions for RSE:

- In what way can Relationships and Sexuality Education best support our learners to engage with their social world in a healthy, positive, and proactive way?
- How can the RSE Code provide the mandatory learning needed for practitioners to develop a positive and protective curriculum, which sits within an emotionally-safe and supportive whole-school approach?
- How can schools and families be supported to work together to ensure that learners get the best possible experience of RSE?

The RSE Code requires schools to design an RSE curriculum around broad interlinking learning strands. These are:

- Relationships and identity
- Sexual health and wellbeing
- Empowerment, safety and respect

The Welsh Government committed to covering the following themes in RSE:

- relationships;
- rights and equity;
- sex, gender and sexuality;
- bodies and body image;
- sexual health and well-being;
- violence, safety and support.

To assist schools and settings in their planning of RSE, these themes are interwoven into the learning strands. Across the learning strands, curriculum content in RSE must be inclusive and reflect diversity. It must include learning that develops learners' awareness and understanding of different identities, views and values and a diversity of relationships, gender and sexuality, including LGBTQ+ lives. Learning about rights and equity runs through all the strands, as well as embedding learning and experience through a rights-based approach to the learning.

Subject Content

The curriculum programme is developed by the RSE Lead in conjunction with the views of teachers, pupils and parents. Each school will aim to meet the learning objectives and content outlined in the RSE Code. All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of all pupils, including those pupils with ALN.

The cluster approach will outline topics taught according to each age group and progression step through **age appropriate phases** as outlined in the Code. Each individual school will use a variety of resources/ materials to deliver RSE which will correspond to thematic topics and discrete teaching methods where appropriate. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons. SLT will ensure that there is adequate training and resources for all staff involved in the delivery of RSE.

Pupil voice

Pupil voice is central to the culture and ethos of the Curriculum for Wales and will help to inform our schools' approach to RSE. Our schools will use the CRUSH resources to support this process. Throughout our RSE approach, we embed pupil voice practices to enable students to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers and to ensure that they listen to other opinions and evidence, reflect on their own perspectives and take a broader view. We want to ensure that all pupil voices are heard but that those views that are hurtful, offensive or exclusionary do not dominate and are addressed. We want to ensure a culture where human rights, social justice, inclusion and diversity are celebrated.

Answering Pupil Questions/Dealing with Sensitive Issues

RSE explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others. As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. Questions will always be answered in **an age and developmentally appropriate way**.

School staff will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their students that could make either party vulnerable; all responses will be **age appropriate** and correspond to the mandatory phase content highlighted in the Code. We believe that an open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older students. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma that can surround some of the issues explored in RSE. Importantly, we believe that children are

better protected from harm and abuse when they are able to discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

Monitoring

We regularly monitor our RSE approach to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, that the curriculum is meeting the new national requirements under the RSE Code and that learning outcomes are reflective of pupil need.

This policy will be reviewed by the school's leadership team in conjunction with the RSE Lead and Governors on a regular basis. If changes are needed, members of staff, parents/carers and pupils will be consulted and any subsequent changes made clearly communicated. The School's Leadership Team monitors the implementation of the programme through their current MER cycle.

Evaluation

Evaluation of our approach is crucial to ensure that we can continue to improve on provision and teaching effectiveness. The evaluation process involves structured and informal pupil and staff feedback in line with schools' current MER cycle.

Pupil Assessment

The Pontypridd Cluster schools use a range of assessment methods to get regular feedback on pupil progress in RSE which is in line with their school's assessment policy. We also use pupil assessment to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention.

Responding to Pupil Needs

Pontypridd High School is fully inclusive which means that we use a whole school, strategic approach to fully include and respond to the needs of all our learners and families.

Ground rules

At Pontypridd High School we endeavour to create safe and supportive learning environments. This helps to create trust and allow learners a safe space to consider learning, ask questions and express their thoughts and feelings. We aim to encourage respectful conversation, which can be achieved by developing a working agreement of ground rules with learners. This helps to maintain professional boundaries and keep learners and practitioners safe.

RSE for Learners with Additional Learning Needs

The RSE Curriculum must be provided for learners with additional learning needs. Staff at Pontypridd High School consider how best to meet the needs of individual learners whose additional needs means that their understanding of sexual health and well-being may not match their chronological age. All staff, including ancillary staff, physiotherapists, nurses and carers are aware of the school's approach to RSE when working with learners with additional learning needs.

Working with Parents/Carers/Guardians

We believe that the successful teaching of RSE involves parents/ carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/ carers can play an important role in the RSE of their children through exploring discussions at home that have taken place in school. Our RSE policy has been developed through consulting parents and carers. We work with parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of what we teach and when through the following methods:

- Letters to parents/carers
- Information leaflet
- Parents' evenings
- School websites

If parents/carers have any questions in relation to RSE, they should contact the school to discuss them with an appropriate member of staff. Occasionally, we may share examples of some of the key resources we use with parents/carers to enable them to continue and support the conversations started in class at home.

Working with Visitors and Outside Agencies

Our schools may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSE approach when necessary. External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our RSE by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school. External visitors may include:

- School nurse.
- Police officers
- NSPCC
- Spectrum
- Guest speakers on various topics such as race and discrimination, human rights

A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons so as to build on the pupil's learning after the session/s as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have. Any external visitor will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy.

Period Dignity

Our school fully supports the Welsh Government Period Dignity Strategy Action Plan, which aims to address the stigma and shame associated with periods. We will support the plan by ensuring the following:

- Provision of free period products, including environmentally friendly resources that learners can access from Pupil Services in the Lower School.
- Poster around the school that signpost where period products can be accessed in public toilets.
- Period Dignity Forms sent out prior to half terms and holidays.
- A robust RSE Curriculum that covers the menstrual cycle and periods for all genders.
- A safe and suitable environment for applying/changing products.
- Provision of sanitary bins in learner toilets to support the safe and environmental disposal of products.
- Clear communication to learners and parents/carers informing them of the available free products on site, and how they can access them.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The Pontypridd Cluster acknowledges that RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within our schools and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Learners Safe. RSE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse, or have experienced, abuse. We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures.

We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.

While each school in the cluster wants to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy. We do this by using a number of teaching techniques including the use of a working agreement, where rights respecting ground rules are created with pupils on what makes a safe and welcoming environment for all. Once ground rules have been set, we will check they are in place they will be actively referred to. Through the use of ground rules and other approaches we believe the school can create a supportive environment.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Peer-on-peer sexual harassment is taken very seriously at Pontypridd High School. The whole school approach to RSE ensures that a preventative and proactive approach is adopted to tackle the issue. This includes providing learners with assurance that school staff will take every incidence of peer-on-peer sexual harassment seriously and work in partnership with the learners, parents/carers, and external agencies where appropriate to deal with any incidents.

Signpost to Services

Learners can access a range of information and advice through:

- WAMs – Katie Rees Year 7 and 8 and Irfan Ally Year 9-11 and Tom Longden Year 12 and 13
- Members of the Wellbeing Team
- Form Tutors and Co Tutors
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg School Nursing Team
- Childline
- Meic
- School based counselling

Eye to Eye (RCT): 01443 202940 or www.eyetoeye.wales

Kooth: Free, safe and anonymous support and counselling is available to all young people aged 11-18 on Kooth.com across Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM).

Equality Statement

Pontypridd High School recognises the Equality Act 2010. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must promote equality and not unlawfully discriminate against learners on the basis 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).

Statement of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of _____ adopted this policy on

It will review the policy by September 2024

In adopting this policy, the Governing Body recognises its responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively, including that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school fulfils its legal obligations.

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____