



Roots *and* Shoots

Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy

2022-2023

Walnut Tree Walk, Kennington, SE11 6DN
Charity number: 1064070

Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy

This policy makes Roots and Shoots' approach clear in regard to the provision of Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) for all our students and the guidelines and procedures within which the training provider operates.

We welcome feedback from all relevant parties including students, staff, other professionals working with our young people and parents/carers. RHSE are challenging but hugely important topic and thus important for all young people.

The policy is informed by Department for Education guidance ['Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education'](#) published in June 2019 and updated in July 2020, ['Preventing and Tackling Bullying'](#) (updated in 2017) ['Working Together to Safeguard Children'](#) (updated in July 2022) and ['Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#) (updated in September 2022) and the Equality Act 2010 (revised June 2014).

Introduction

All children and young people are entitled to Relationships, Health and Sex Education. This entitlement is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which establishes that all young people have the same right to enjoy their sexuality within the highest attainable standard of health, free of coercion and violence, and to access quality sexuality education and sexual health services.

RHSE is compulsory across all UK schools and at Roots and Shoots it is considered a vital part of every young person's learning journey.

RHSE and SEND

It is important to bear in mind the diversity of students and Roots and Shoots, and there is no assumption that students with a particular type of disability or need should be taught in the same way as each other.

Teaching of all subjects is tailored to remove barriers and meet the needs of the individual students being taught; for our disabled students and students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), we ensure that reasonable adjustments to teaching are informed by students themselves.

RHSE Delivery

- Our student cohort are aged 16+ and therefore are regarded as young adults/adults with capacity to make their own informed choices.
- Our focus is on engagement and learning in RHSE with the students themselves. This is in line with the Mental Capacity Act - adult students have an assumed ability and right to make their own decisions, and parents/carers must be deputised by the Court of Protection to override their wishes.
- However, parents/carers are often the greatest support in the life of a young person with SEN, and will always know them better. With agreement from the young person, we may involve parents in how they wish to be supported.
- **Social Skills sessions**, delivered by our **Speech and Language Therapists** and **Art Therapist**, aim to give students the right strategies to suit their own needs. They work closely with Tutors to incorporate RHSE into all student lessons. This joined up approach is important for young people with SEN and who may be facing challenges in their own personal lives.
- The dedicated staff team agrees vocabulary and shares with external providers to give consistency of language. External providers who specialise in supporting key aspects of RHSE for young people with additional needs are directly commissioned to provide bespoke sessions for the Roots and Shoots cohort. Roots and Shoots staff support and facilitate at all times when external providers lead sessions so that student wellbeing can be monitored by those who know them.
- Workshops will be delivered in a manner suited to young people with additional needs, with opportunities to provide 1:1 support with regard to specific issues.

Integrated Curriculum

At Roots and Shoots, RHSE topics are regularly covered across all subject lessons. This helps to ensure best access for all young people whatever their background or needs. For example, in **Functional Skills** students are encouraged to discuss news updates as a basis for discussing their own situations, related to RHSE topics.

In **Employability** students learn about healthy living, personal hygiene, personal and professional relationships in a working environment.

In **Wellbeing sessions** students are encouraged to share their own views and experiences in relation to their positive and negative experiences. Ensuring a comfortable environment where students feel safe helps them to talk about subjects which can sometimes be challenging.




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We also organise **specialist RHSE workshops** delivered by external providers who are trained in a particular area. E.g. **Safeguarding and Prevent, Media Literacy and Extremism** and **British Values**.

EHC Plans and Self Assessment

All students at Roots and Shoots have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan. For students with more significant needs, their particular RHSE needs may helpfully be assessed as part of their EHC needs assessment, with provision to meet those needs set out in their EHC plan.

At Roots and Shoots our students complete a Personal and Social skills self assessment at the beginning of each year. This includes a range of questions around the student’s own views of their social, communication, personal and practical skills. It gives teaching staff a starting point from which to move forward.

SOCIAL SKILLS	Yes 	Maybe/ Sometimes 	No 
1.1 I can use public transport by myself			
1.2 I am confident using the Internet			
1.3 I am able to make new friends online			
1.4 I'd be happy meeting a new friend I'd met online			
1.5 I like to spend time out with friends			
1.6 I like to spend time with my family			

Later in the year, all students complete a learner voice quiz:

16. I know what British Values are *

1 2 3 4 5

No, not at all 😞 Yes, definitely 😊

17. I feel that I am being given enough support to help me find work in the future *

1 2 3 4 5

No, not at all 😞 Yes, definitely 😊

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

A student should understand that they can talk to staff in confidence. However, if staff are concerned that a student is at risk or in danger, they will follow the Safeguarding Policy and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies. The student concerned will be informed that the confidentiality is to be breached and the reasons why. The member of staff will support the student through the process. We strive to establish a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and young people alike. To enable this, it is important that 'ground rules' are agreed and owned at the beginning of the lessons.

This includes the aspects below:

- We take turns to speak
- We use kind and positive words
- We listen to each other
- We have the right to pass
- We only use names when giving compliments or when being positive
- We do not ask personal questions
- We respect each other's privacy (confidentiality) Safeguarding staff need to be aware that effective RHSE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. The staff member will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputies, in line with the Safeguarding Policy. A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality and must follow the establishment's protocols in this regard.

RHSE and Other Beliefs

At Roots and Shoots, the religious background of all students will be taken into account when planning teaching, so that the topics that are included in RHSE are appropriately handled.

We speak to students about their other beliefs to ensure that we comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics. We welcome input from other key stakeholders.

RHSE and the Law

At Roots and Shoots, teaching reflects the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make. We make this accessible to all students regardless of their experiences or needs.

RHSE at Roots and Shoots Q&A

Q: Why is RHSE relevant for students at Roots and Shoots?

Appropriate RHSE should be provided for students at all levels of development.

RHSE is recommended to continue into Further Education, and this is of particular relevance for the cohort of learners at Roots and Shoots who may experience additional vulnerabilities.

No matter their vulnerability, many young people with SEN will be or have gone through puberty and are beginning to think about relationships and sex.

It is important to recognise that young people with SEN/D may present as emotionally and/or physically developing at different levels to their chronological age, and this is taken into account when teaching RHSE at Roots and Shoots.

Q: Can a young person be withdrawn from RHSE?

If a young person has capacity, then they can request not to be included or remove themselves from a session. If a parent or carer is deputised by the Court of Protection they can also make this decision on behalf of the young person and in their best interest. We would intend to consider each case individually.

Q: What is the most effective model of delivery for RHSE with students with SEND?

RHSE is most effective when delivered through a whole training provider approach. For students with SEND, this means working continuously through informal opportunities as well as the formal RHSE curriculum. For example, when students are queuing for lunch there is an opportunity to reinforce learning about personal space and boundaries.

All staff should be actively involved in offering consistent messages around RHSE. Students will learn from the way staff react in everyday situations and interactions such as those concerned with consent or privacy e.g. a matter of fact tone of voice and calm reaction to a situation can be helpful. It is also helpful for the response from staff to be linked to RHSE learning and school codes of behaviour. There are many ways to link with other parts of the curriculum and school day too, for example, through breaktime rules, Anti-Bullying Week, displays about puberty and e-safety initiatives.

Q: What is different about RHSE for students with SEND?

In essence, at Roots and Shoots the curriculum and topics covered are similar to RHSE with mainstream students. However, the pace and detail of topics may be different and students may require support to generalise their learning outside of RHSE lessons and to personalise the learning to their own relationships, behaviours and maturation.

It may be appropriate to revisit topics more frequently with students with SEND to support 'overlearning' (i.e. practising and embedding the new skills, so the young person retains the learning beyond the initial success and develops mastery) for new and abstract topics. There may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of students at different developmental stages and to be mindful of greater vulnerability to bullying, exploitation and other issues for students with SEND. For example, older students at an earlier level of development are more vulnerable and therefore have greater need to be informed and supported in RHSE.

Q. How can we use RHSE to tackle challenging sexualised behaviours?

The aim of RHSE is for students to understand consent, appropriate touch, and boundaries - public and private. Proactive RHSE teaching can be a significant part of addressing a range of behaviour support needs e.g. respecting boundaries and privacy, public and private behaviours and places, alongside the usual behaviour management strategies to ensure the safety and dignity of all students.

Q. How can we ensure RHSE is inclusive for students with SEND?

At Roots and Shoots we take an inclusive approach to RHSE, ensuring that resources used are representative of the student cohort: SEND, LGBT+, a range of ethnicities, and other protected characteristics. The choice of images and characterisation will reinforce the message that human sexuality is a positive thing and that no-one is excluded from that. In order to support students with additional learning needs,

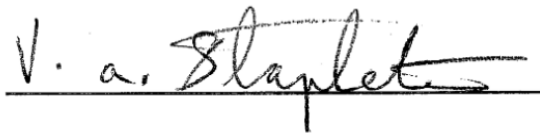
follow up sessions may be used with smaller groups to personalise the learning from larger group sessions. This may be targeted small group sessions, 1-1 as appropriate, or referrals to specific support staff.

Signed by the Director:



Date: 27/04/2023

Signed by the Chair of Trustees:



Date: 27/04/2023