

Roots *and* Shoots

RHSE - Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education

Last Updated: 25 Sept 2023

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

RHSE - Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education

A snapshot now - February 2023

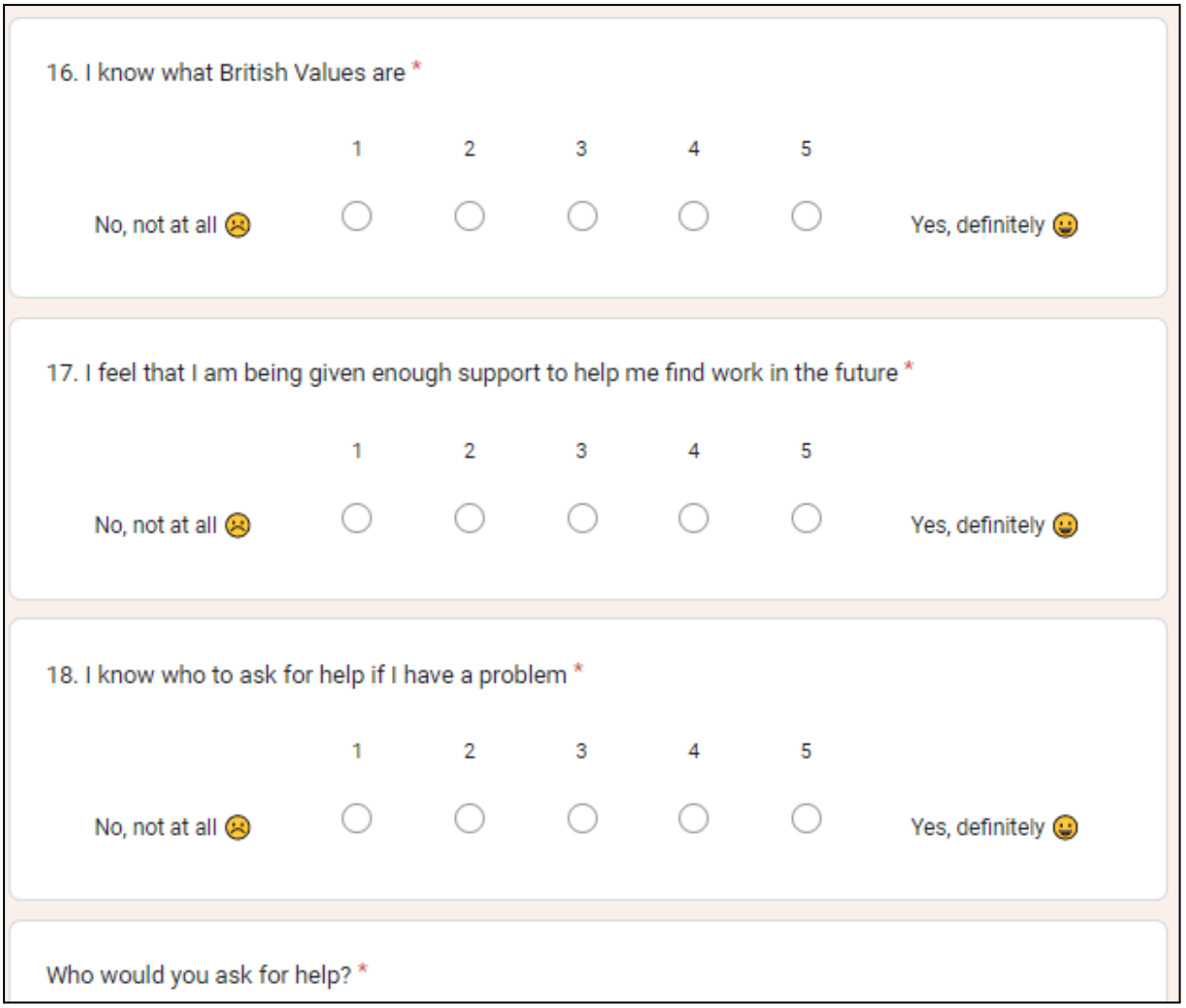
RHSE is now compulsory across all UK schools and we think it is a vital part of every young person's learning journey.

Learners complete a Personal and Social skills self assessment at the beginning of the year. This includes a range of questions around a young person's own views of their social, communication, personal and practical skills. It gives teaching staff a starting point from which to move forward.

Example of self assessment questions:

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:



Topics under the RSHE is regularly covered in lessons:

Functional Skills - reading and discussing the news

Employability - Healthy living, personal Hygiene

Social Skills sessions delivered by our in house SALT and AT delivered by our in house Counsellor weekly They also work closely with Tutors so they are able to incorporate RHSE into their lessons

Specific RHSE workshops delivered by external providers or our SALT

Online safety, appropriate behaviour and British values workshops

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers

Aims

To make clear what Roots and Shoots' approach is with regard to the provision of Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) for all our pupils and the guidelines and procedures within which the college operates. 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 and Promote the Welfare of Children (updated in December 2020) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated in September 2022) and the Equality Act 2010 (revised June 2014).

Introduction

All children are entitled to Relationships 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 and SEND

In practice there is a significant overlap between disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and throughout this guide we refer to 'pupils with SEND.' However, it is important to bear in mind the diversity of pupils and there should be no assumption even that pupils with a particular type of disability or need should be taught in the same way as each other. Teaching of any subject should be tailored to remove barriers and meet the needs of the individual pupils being taught; for disabled pupils and pupils with SEN, it is therefore all the more important that reasonable adjustments to teaching are informed by parents and pupils themselves. For pupils with more significant needs, their particular RSE needs may helpfully be assessed as part of an Education Health Care (EHC) needs assessment, with provision to meet those needs set out in their EHC plan. For pupils who already have

an EHC plan, specific consideration of their RSE needs may helpfully be provided at annual review.

Questions

Q: When does RSE start for pupils with SEND?
As with all pupils, RSE for pupils with SEND should be part of life-long learning and begin at reception/school entry and continue throughout formal education and beyond. Start with core concepts such as public and private, using correct terms for private parts of the body, an understanding of rights relating to our bodies, rules relating to touch, positive friendships, respect and consent. Appropriate RSE should be provided for pupils at all levels of development.

Q: What is the most effective model of delivery for RSE with pupils with SEND? RSE is most effective when delivered through a whole school approach.
For pupils with SEND, this means working continuously through informal opportunities as well as the formal RSE curriculum. For example, when pupils are queuing for lunch there is an opportunity to reinforce learning about personal boundaries. All staff should be actively involved in offering consistent messages around RSE, e.g. teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, drivers, travel guides. Pupils 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, for example where a pupil is touching or rubbing their own genitalia directly or through clothes in public. It is also helpful for the response from staff to be linked to RSE 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 playground rules, Anti-Bullying Week, displays about puberty and e-safety initiatives.

Q: What is different about RSE for pupils with SEND?
In essence the curriculum and topics covered are similar to RSE with mainstream pupils however, the pace and detail of topics may be different and pupils may need lots of support to generalise their learning outside of RSE lessons and support to personalise the learning to their own relationships, behaviours and maturation. It may be appropriate to revisit topics more frequently with pupils with SEND to support 'overlearning' (i.e. practising and embedding the new skills, so the learner retains the learning beyond the initial success and develops mastery) for new and abstract topics. Government guidance acknowledges that there may be a need for schools to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. The guidance also acknowledges the greater vulnerability to bullying, exploitation and other issues for pupils with SEND. For example, older pupils at an earlier level of development are more vulnerable and therefore have greater need to be informed and supported in RSE. We recommend caution in omitting content, encouraging teachers of learners with SEND to

differentiate teaching to developmental ability wherever possible, rather than limit the topics covered.

Q: What about RSE for pupils with SEND in mainstream education?
Pupils with SEND in mainstream schools may need additional support to make sense of RSE lessons, sometimes separate small group sessions or individual work can help, especially since aspects of their maturity may lag behind their peers. It may be appropriate to offer additional small group sessions for pupils with SEND which allow for questions and discussion that might be challenging or increase the risk of bullying in a usual class format.

Q: What about 'High Functioning' pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions?
Sometimes RSE needs for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions in mainstream schools can be overlooked, their academic capabilities masking their social and emotional needs. Although they may understand the concrete information, work about relationships, consent and understanding risk and coercion can be very challenging for some young people on the spectrum. Individual sessions or small group provision in addition to mainstream classes can be beneficial to address this. There is likely to be a higher incidence of 'social masking' and this should be taken in to consideration when evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and whether pupils have understood the nuances of social and appropriate intimate relationships.

Q: What about pupils with a physical disability?
Physical disability may impact on every aspect of an individual's life including how they socialise, develop relationships and have sex. Pupils with physical disability may have to find different ways to communicate, take part in learning and everyday activities: including making friends and socialising with others. They may have anxiety about a different body shape or image, worry about how their body works and what others may think. They may have additional worries or questions about puberty, how they can have sex and whether they can have children. They may not have the opportunity to talk about these things with others with similar needs. It is important that these pupils have access to RSE alongside their peers as well as additional opportunities to explore questions that the RSE curriculum may raise for them. These conversations should take place in a safe space with a trusted and informed adult with access to appropriate, high quality information and resources specific to their needs and requirements. Sometimes it may be helpful if medical advice is sought by the family and shared as appropriate with the school to aid the planning and delivery of RSE with the consent of the young person.

Q: Is RSE relevant for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD)?

Yes, pupils with PMLD have a right to good quality RSE that provides a curriculum differentiated to cater for their range of needs and abilities. The Encountering and Foundation stages of the PSHE Association Planning Framework for pupils with SEND offers a useful guide. Whilst capacity to consent may be an issue for some pupils with PMLD it is important that their lived experience reflects good RSE principles. Consent may be experienced by a pupil with PMLD when a teacher leaves time following a request, for example saying and demonstrating 'I would like to move you in your wheelchair to your desk' and then waiting a moment when a pupil may indicate readiness before the teacher completes the action. Privacy can be experienced by the pupil in how the teaching assistant supports individual personal care, they can narrate their actions e.g. 'I am closing the curtain to make this space private, I am helping you because I am your key worker, I am cleaning your vulva/penis in private' so topics such as public/private, accurate naming of body parts and safeguarding are all experienced by the pupil, contextualised and repeated daily.

Q. How can parents and carers be involved in RSE?

Working in partnership with parents and carers is a very important strand of effective RSE. Parents of pupils with SEND may face challenging issues at home that are relevant to RSE. Parents will appreciate information about what school is providing in RSE and may value opportunities for further discussion and support. Young people with additional needs say that they want more parental involvement in RSE so that they can continue their learning at home. Working in partnership with parents also helps to achieve consistency across home and school and can contribute to parents positively supporting their child's independence and successful journey to adulthood. Even a simple act of pupils making and taking home a private sign for a bathroom or bedroom may contribute to parents reflecting on their child's need for privacy as they mature. Parents' meetings and EHC plan meetings are also a useful opportunity to recognise such shared needs and to prepare them and their children for puberty. Involving parents also enables greater understanding about families' cultural and faith perspectives and their relevance to RSE.

Q: How do we differentiate RSE according to need?

A well-planned, age and stage-appropriate curriculum for RSE is essential. For some pupils with SEND, additional individual planning and focus may also be needed. This can be done using planning tools such as the PSHE Association Planning Framework for pupils with SEND. Sometimes it is useful to think about maturity rather than chronological age, and also to factor in physical maturity which may be ahead of emotional or social maturity. It is important that all pupils are prepared for puberty, and this may require some individualised support and potentially some single gender work to learn about the more intimate aspects of personal hygiene and sexual development. It is important to ensure that RSE is appropriate to the pupils' maturity,

social understanding and interest in the subject, tailoring the delivery to support them to fully access the learning.

Q. How can we use RSE to tackle challenging sexualised behaviours?
The core concepts in RSE need to be embedded and reinforced from an early age. Pupils need to acquire knowledge of consent, appropriate touch, boundaries and public and private. Proactive RSE 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 pupils. RSE is valuable in tackling an individual pupil's sexualised behaviour in school. For example discussion is necessary regarding sexual behaviours which would be inappropriate in school, but may be healthy and safe in the appropriate context, e.g. masturbation in the classroom versus in the learner's bedroom in private. Strategies can be shared with home to support parents and carers to help them deal with the issues that present at home and ensure a consistent response.

Q. How can we ensure RSE is inclusive for pupils with SEND?
Ensure all resources and images used are inclusive of all pupils e.g. including those in wheelchairs, or wearing hearing aids – as a general rule in both mainstream and SEND provision, not just when a pupil in a wheelchair is in the RSE class. This should be part of your general inclusive approach to RSE (and in other subjects and whole-school) and images should represent SEND, LGBT+, a range of ethnicities, and all the protected characteristics. Your choice of images and characterisation should reinforce the message that human sexuality is a positive thing and that no-one is excluded from that. Materials should be available in appropriate learning media including tactile diagrams and physical materials when required. Be aware of language used in RSE and ensure that it is inclusive, for example don't talk about 'jumping into bed' which may be a confusing use of language for pupils on the autism spectrum and may exclude people with mobility issues. Again, reflect on inclusivity of language across the protected characteristics not just in terms of SEN and disability, e.g. using the phrase 'most girls / boys' rather than 'all' when describing puberty and body changes, to support LGBT+ inclusivity. Follow up sessions may be used with smaller groups to personalise the learning from RSE group lessons. These may be targeted small group sessions, 1-1 as appropriate, or referrals to specific support staff. The provisions of the Equalities Act mean that positive action can and should be taken, to address particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic. Government RSE guidance highlights that 'some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND', and that 'Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities'.

TOP TIPS

The following practical tips can make a big contribution to RSE teaching with SEND pupils that is effective, safe and enjoyable for both pupils and staff.

Getting started: the whole-school approach

• Establish early partnership with parents/ carers. These early partnerships are crucial in delivering consistent, clear messages to pupils and supporting family engagement with RSE.

• Identify and support a core group of committed staff who can deliver RSE, support each other and work together on individual needs and group programmes. Take time to work with staff around their values relating to RSE, including addressing any concerns about age appropriateness and differentiating for learners' needs and abilities

• Agree your vocabulary as a school first. Once agreed within the staff group and governors and is established as a school policy this vocabulary can be communicated to everyone, consistently reinforced and explanations given when needed.

• Always use correct language for private body parts. If only learning one word, make it one widely used, acceptable and understandable to all. Remember that patterns and language that are first learned can remain for life. For example, if a family word is learned for referring to genitalia at home, some pupils may struggle to understand that there can be another word that is used in more formal circumstances. If a child does use a family word, it is important to give the proper name as well, to avoid any misunderstanding. This is important for safeguarding.

• Identify effective curriculum models for general delivery but also recognise that work often responds to an individual's needs, specifically focused and planned.

• Listen to children and young people – identify their needs and create a balance alongside understanding the perspectives of families.

Confidentiality

A pupil should understand that they can talk to their teachers in confidence. However, if the teacher concerned believes that a pupil is at risk or in danger, he/she will follow the school's Safeguarding Policy and seek advice from the DSL or senior manager. The pupil concerned will be informed that the confidentiality is to be breached and the reasons why. The teacher or member of staff will support the pupil 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 children 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:

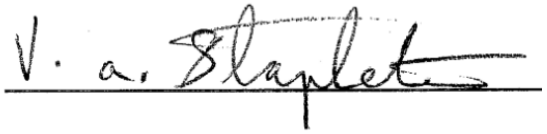
- We take turns to speak
- We use kind and positive words
- We listen to each other
- We have the right to pass
- We only use names when giving compliments or when being positive
- We do not ask personal questions
- We respect each other's privacy (confidentiality) Safeguarding Teachers need to be aware 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), in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy. A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality and must follow the school protocols in this regard.

Signed by the Director:



Date: 25/09/23

Signed by the Chair of Trustees:



Date: 25/09/23