

NORTH GOSFORTH ACADEMY

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is an integral part of our work at North Gosforth Academy to help students to be physically, socially, and emotionally healthy and to develop in to responsible and informed members of society.

Effective RSE is important if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It should be firmly rooted in the framework for PSHE education and the National Curriculum.

Requirements for schools regarding RSE and Health education and the law

The Department of Education informed all state secondary schools that from September 2020 the teaching of RSE would be compulsory. In support of this decision, the Secretary of State for Education stated the following:

‘Today’s children and young people 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.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The key decisions on these subjects have been informed by a thorough engagement process, including a public call for evidence that received over 23,000 responses from parents, young people, schools and experts and a public consultation where over 40,000 people contacted the Department for Education’.

What is relationships and sex education?

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

How is RSE delivered?

RSE is delivered in all years as part of the ‘Learning for Life’ programme in Key Stage 3 and 4 by a dedicated team of teachers. In addition, aspects are covered through the National Curriculum science, computing and ethics curriculums and the programme may also be complemented by contributions from external agencies delivering whole class and small group sessions. These contributions will always work to the learning outcomes in our programme.



How will delivery of the content be made accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEND)?

Teaching staff will tailor the delivery of the Learning for Life curriculum to the needs of all their students, differentiating lesson plans where appropriate, to take account of the sensitivity and maturity of the students in their care. Teaching staff will take particular note of student information provided by the school's SEND co-ordinator.

How it will the RSE policy be kept under review?

The RSE policy will be reviewed in the autumn of each academic year. Throughout the academic year we will engage with students, staff and parents as part of consultation for policy development. We will consider the needs of our schools and pupils, and we will adapt our curriculum to ensure it is tailored accordingly.

How often will the RSE policy be updated?

The policy will be updated if required based on the review of the policy each autumn of the academic year.

Parents' right to withdraw their child from RSE.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request we at North Gosforth Academy believe it would be good practice for the Principal or designated member of staff to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The Principal or designate will discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child's social and emotional wellbeing, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will 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 will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Principal 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, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Approval of the RSE policy

Approval of the RSE policy will be given by the Trustees of the school.



For further information on our RSE programme and resources, please contact the Assistant Principal with responsibility for Personal Development. The curriculum plan for the 'Learning for Life' programme can be found in the link below
[Learning for Life \(northgosforthacademy.org.uk\)](https://northgosforthacademy.org.uk)

***The consultation into the new RSHE draft guidance closed on 11th July 2024.**

This policy will be reviewed again when the final RSHE guidance is published, which may be before the review date of September 2025.

