



Fitzalan Cluster

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

Written in line with Welsh Government Statutory Guidance, the RSE code and legislative summary (January 2022)

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Consultees	Local Authority, CSC, Welsh Government Governors, Parents/Carers
Date of Policy	Summer 2023
Review date	Summer 2025

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1. Introduction

The Fitzalan Cluster is committed to adopting a whole school approach to high quality provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) for all learners. This policy has been developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders including staff, parents/carers, governors and external organisations as well as the active engagement of learners. It will provide all stakeholders with information about the provision of RSE in our schools.

We believe all learners have the right to receive high quality, holistic and inclusive education about relationships and sexuality.

High quality RSE allows for all learners to grow and develop in a safe environment, to understand how to become healthy adults who are critical thinkers, whilst developing positive and healthy relationships with others. It is important that learners are able to explore, develop and nurture positive attitudes towards equality, gender diversity and respectful relationships. This RSE Policy supports wider approaches to preventing violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence (VAWDASV), harmful sexual behaviours and peer on peer harassment and abuse.

2. What is RSE?

RSE encompasses the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and values that will empower learners throughout compulsory education (3-16 years) to -

- Support their health and well-being
- Develop healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships of all kinds, including those with family and friends and, as they get older, romantic and sexual relationships
- Navigate and make sense of how relationships, sex, gender, and sexuality shape their own and other peoples' identities and lives
- Understand and support their rights and those of others to enjoy equitable, safe, healthy and fulfilling relationships throughout their lives and to advocate for these

3. Aims of RSE

Our cluster 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, families, staff and wider school community.

We believe that -

- Good quality RSE is **positive, protective and preventative and** underpinned by a needs led, rights based approach which takes a positive view of human sexuality and relationships

- 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, respect and tolerance. This is the foundation of RSE in our schools
- 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

3.1 Our Curriculum

Our curriculum will -

- Provide accurate facts
- Use age appropriate correct biological terminology
- Promote a safe, positive, open and honest learning culture, free from stigma, shame, fear and guilt,. It will be positively inclusive, respectful and safe for all learners
- Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and values in relation to RSE
- Empower learners to make responsible, well informed decisions and to be able to understand themselves and others
- Challenge harmful stereotypes and perceptions, including gender norms
- Provide access to objective, supportive and inclusive information about growing up, body changes, healthy relationships and reproductive and sexual health.
- Provide information about where learners can access help and support services in relation to RSE

4. Legislation and Guidance

RSE is mandatory for all learners in Wales from ages 3 to 16.

The [RSE Code](#) is issued in legislation under Section 8 of the Curriculum and Assessments (Wales) Act 2021, and clearly states the mandatory requirements for RSE which schools and education provisions have to deliver.

Key points of the RSE curriculum are:

- All learners will take part in all lessons in line with the rollout of the new curriculum
- It is appropriate for learners
- It includes learning that develops learners' awareness and understanding of different identities, views and values and a diversity of relationships, gender and sexuality, including LGBTQ+ lives

The [RSE Statutory Guidance](#) (2022) is published under Section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is designed to assist those responsible, as stated in the RSE Code, to design the RSE Curriculum for their school.

Our curriculum complies with the legal statutory duty stated in the Welsh Government RSE Code.

Our cluster policy and curriculum have been developed in line with Welsh Government statutory guidance and [legislative summary](#) and aligns with the Equality Act 2010.

5. Responsibilities for RSE

In our cluster RSE is everyone's responsibility, 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.

5.1 Role of the Governing Body

The role of the governing body is to -

- Determine and authorise the RSE Policy, ensuring it is compliant with the mandatory requirements outlined in the RSE Code
- Ensure the RSE Policy is up to date and reviewed at least every two years
- Ensure the RSE Policy is widely disseminated throughout the whole school community

5.2 Role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The role of the headteacher and SLT is to -

- Co-ordinate the formulation of the RSE Policy by involving all relevant stakeholders
- Allocate a named member of staff to lead 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 (CPD) 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
- Determine and allocate funding for the RSE Curriculum to support resources/professional training/external organisations costs
- Audit RSE in line with the review of this policy and/or considering any new developments, using the audit tool in **Appendix 1**.

5.3 Role of the RSE Lead

The role of the RSE lead is to -

- Implement a progressive, appropriate RSE curriculum for all learners, in line with the mandatory requirements outlined in the RSE Code
- Monitor and evaluate RSE in conjunction with other subject leaders to ensure that it is integrated effectively across all Areas of Learning Experience (AoLEs)
- Monitor and evaluate the scheme of work and the suitability of resources
- Ensure pupil voice is reflected within RSE
- Liaise with outside agencies and co-ordinate their involvement with RSE where appropriate
- Liaise with parents/carers where needed regarding RSE Curriculum
- Liaise with the Local Authority and Healthy Schools Team
- Offer support to parents/carers in talking to their children about RSE
- Monitor and evaluate the RSE to ensure that it remains relevant, up to date and meets the needs of all learners

5.4 Role of Class Teachers

The role of class teachers is to -

- Deliver RSE through relevant AoLEs as well as through cluster planned RSE lessons
- Provide accurate, unbiased information on RSE to learners, as part of our cluster's pluralistic approach. This means that where questions of values are concerned, we will acknowledge that there are a range of views.

6. RSE Curriculum

RSE is a broad, interdisciplinary and complex area that includes biological, social, psychological, spiritual, ethical and cultural dimensions. Our cluster provides a high quality pluralistic RSE Curriculum which is based around the six key principles for RSE as set out in the [Welsh Government RSE guidance](#). This provision is inclusive, factually correct, and encourages learners to critically engage with the materials used. The RSE Curriculum will be taught by staff using cross cutting themes and specific lessons within related AoLEs.

6.1 Positive, Protective and Preventative RSE

Building on the Code, the approach to RSE in our cluster is positive, protective and preventative.

As they grow older, we support learners to –

- Have access to objective, supportive and inclusive information about growing up, changing, relationship and reproductive and sexual health
- Understand and manage change, conflict and pressure
- Recognise potentially harmful behaviours in relationships and know how to seek support

- Have the knowledge to recognise all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect, including [violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence](#)
- Seek help and advice where appropriate

6.2 Inclusivity, Including LGBTQ+ Inclusivity

In line with the mandatory requirements of the Code, RSE will be taught in a way that is inclusive, in accordance with the principles of the Equality Act (2010). This helps ensure that all learners can see themselves, their families, their communities and each other reflected across the curriculum and can learn to value difference and diversity as a source of strength. This contributes to a cohesive, tolerant, fair and equitable society that equips learners with skills for life. This includes respect for all the protected characteristics.(Appendix 3)

6.3 Age Related RSE Strands

- **Relationships and Identity –**
 - helping learners to develop the skills they need to develop healthy, safe, and fulfilling relationships with others
 - helping learners to make sense of their thoughts and feelings
- **Sexual health and Well-being –**
 - helping learners to draw on factual sources regarding their sexual and reproductive health and well-being, allowing them to make informed decisions throughout their lives
- **Empowerment, Safety and Respect –**
 - helping to protect learners from all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect
 - enabling learners to recognise unsafe or harmful relationships and situations,
 - supporting learners to recognise when, how and where to seek support and advice

The Welsh Government is 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. These themes are interwoven into the above strands.

6.4 Understanding Progression in RSE

We will broadly follow the Phases 1, 2 and 3 approach, as outlined by the Welsh Government's Code, in terms of what content is covered by each age range. This means we will take account of a range of factors including the learner's age, knowledge and maturity, any additional learning needs as well as anticipating their physiological and emotional or social development and needs, when lesson planning. Phase 1 and 2 will be taught in Primary schools, Phase 3 will be taught only in secondary school.

- **Phase 1:** from age 3 - Primary
- **Phase 2:** from age 7 - Primary
- **Phase 3:** from age 11 - Secondary

The principles of progression across the [Health and well-being AoLE](#) offers guidance to [progression](#) in RSE. Our curriculum revisits content, themes and topics, so reinforcing, and building on learners' developing understanding and changing needs.

For Fitzalan High School

As the school introduces the new Curriculum for Wales as a phased roll out, RSE will also be taught through Personal and Social Education (PSE), and for some year groups the Health and Well-being AoLE. The teaching of topics will be in line with requirements outlined in the RSE Code.

7. Enabling Human Rights and the UNCRC

As the world around us evolves, we will uphold learners' rights under the [United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC) to education (Article 28) which prepares them to understand others (Article 29) through an inclusive, holistic, evidence-based and participative RSE Curriculum. In this way, learners develop an understanding of how rights are related to all aspects of RSE and contribute to the freedom, dignity, well-being and safety of all people. This also helps learners to understand the importance of equity, recognising the importance of rights in ensuring fair treatment for all.

Everyone who works with children and young people will always do what is best for each learner, as part of our whole school approach to RSE (Article 3).

The rights below underpin and shape our RSE curriculum and so advocates for -

1. Non discriminatory (Article 2)
2. Children to be heard and be involved in decision making (Article 12)
3. Freedom of expression (Article 13)

4. Following your own religion (Article 14)
5. Having privacy (Article 16)
6. Accessing information to make informed decisions (Article 17)
7. Not being harmed, being looked after and kept safe (Article 19)
8. Experiencing the highest attainable health, access to health facilities and preventative health care (Article 24)
9. Receiving education that prepares children to understand others (Article 29)
10. Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation (Article 34)
11. Receiving special help if they have been abused (Article 39)

We also link learning to the United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD): [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) | [United Nations Enable](#)

8. Responding to Pupils' Needs

Fitzalan cluster is fully inclusive which means that we use a whole school, strategic approach to fully include and respond to the learning needs of all our learners.

8.1 Ground Rules

As in all teaching and learning, 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. For example, creative approaches can help learners share their questions, views and experiences anonymously, allowing more open, honest discussion (Appendix 2).

8.1 Dealing with Questions

If staff are asked questions by learners during RSE lessons which may be of a sensitive nature, they will never disclose their personal experiences. They will use their professional judgement in providing answers which are age and stage appropriate to the maturity of the learner or of other learners who may be listening. There may be times when teachers feel that pupils should be advised to ask a trusted adult. If there are any safeguarding concerns, the safeguarding policies will always take preference.

All schools will include a question box within all RSE lessons for pupils to anonymously ask a question. Any information that the teacher feels would support the class will be followed up in a later activity or discussion. If a teacher does not know the answer to a question, they will acknowledge this and undertake research to find the answer.

Sometimes an individual learner may ask an explicit or inappropriate question. If this situation arises, the learner will be reminded of the class agreement/ground rules. If a question feels inappropriate for a learner, or for the whole class or raises concerns, the teacher will acknowledge the question and reassure the learner that they will attend to it after the lesson on an individual basis. In this way, the learner will feel they

have been treated with respect, but inappropriate or personal information will not be shared with the rest of the class.

8.2 RSE for Learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

RSE must be provided for learners with ALN. We recognise that learners with ALN can be more vulnerable to exploitation, so our cluster will consider how best to meet the needs of individual learners whose additional needs means that their understanding of areas such as sexual health and well-being may not match their chronological age.

9. Use of Local, National and School Level Data

We use a range of available health and well-being data to develop a bespoke RSE curriculum which meets the needs of all learners. This includes data captured through surveys such as the School Health Research network (SHRN).

10. RSE resources

We use RSE resources which are relevant, reputable, developmentally appropriate, inclusive and sensitive to learners' needs to support the teaching of RSE.

Parents/carers are invited to view or discuss the resources the school intends to use in order to provide reassurance and to enable conversations, to be reinforced and continued in the home. We use the following key resources –

- SENSE
- Primary Growing Up
- NSPCC
- Hafan Cymru (Spectrum Project)
- AGENDA
- CRUSH
- School Beat – Wales Police Schools Programme

Parents/carers are invited to view or discuss the resources that we will use in order to provide reassurance and to enable conversations to be continued at home.

11. Partnerships and Engagement with Stakeholders

11.1 Working with Parents/Carers

Our curriculum was developed taking on board the views of all stakeholders. Any further amendments will be considered in the light of the views of all stakeholders.

11.2 External Partnerships

Whilst we are responsible for the delivery of the RSE Curriculum, we recognise the value of involving appropriate external agencies/visiting speakers to complement the RSE curriculum, such as school nurse, design to smile, the police, RNLI, Kerbcraft and fire service, to complement the RSE Curriculum. This input does not substitute or replace the school/education provision and delivery of RSE.

Good practice for when working with external agencies/visiting speakers -

- The external agency has the right skills, knowledge and competency, and has a professional reputation for being holistic and inclusive in their approach to RSE
- Aims and learning outcomes are age appropriate for the intended learners
- The external agency/visiting speakers have a DBS certificate and are considered appropriate in respect of safeguarding procedures
- The external agency are aware of any relevant policies
- Staff will inform and prepare learners for the visit of an external agency/visiting speaker and allow them time to prepare questions prior to this, if appropriate
- Staff will remain in the classroom at all times as they are responsible for the learners and behaviour management.

11.3 Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS)

We participate in the WNHSS. This provides a framework for the development of a whole school approach to RSE through effectively linking policy, staff, development of a spiral curriculum, school ethos, learner voice and the wider community through the health topic area of Personal Development and Relationships.

12. Related Policies

This Policy is not be read in isolation. All staff are aware and adhere to relevant school policies which complement RSE. These include:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding/child protection
- Substance Use and Misuse
- Equality and Diversity
- Internet Safety/e-safety
- Behaviour Management/ Positive Relationships

13. Period Dignity

We fully support the Welsh Government Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan, which aims to end the stigma and shame associated with periods.

We will support the plan by ensuring the following -

1. Provision of free period products, including environmentally friendly products, that learners can access
2. An RSE Curriculum which includes the menstrual cycle and periods for all learners as appropriate
3. A safe and suitable environment for applying/changing products
4. Provision of sanitary bins in learner toilets to support the safe and environmentally responsible disposal of products
5. Clear communication to learners and parents/carers informing them of the available free products on site, and how they can access them.

14. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Our RSE curriculum supports learners to be able to develop their knowledge, awareness and understanding on how to recognise discriminatory behaviours, harmful sexual behaviours, unhealthy and abusive/violent relationships, whilst ensuring that all learners develop an understanding of what consent is, including developing skills on how to give and withdraw consent.

It is important that all school staff receive the appropriate safeguarding training. They understand that they have a duty to follow the safeguarding policies and procedures, which will come from the All Wales Child Protection Procedures/LEA protocol if there are safeguarding concerns.

Our RSE curriculum supports learners to be able to build their knowledge and understanding of how to recognise harmful sexual behaviours, discrimination, abusive relationships, and violence and develop an understanding of consent. Learners may disclose information to school staff that cannot remain confidential. When this occurs, our staff will –

- Remind learners that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- Inform learners if they are going to break confidentiality
- Encourage learners to talk about any worries and concerns they have with parents/carers, if appropriate
- Ensure learners are supported by an appropriate member of staff
- Follow each school's Safeguarding Policy where there are child protection concerns

Where appropriate, for learners aged 13 and above, staff can issue/signpost learners to information on contraception and where they can access local sexual health provision. [The Sexual Offences Act 2003 \(England and Wales\)](#) states that young people under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity, therefore if a learner

under the age of 13 discloses that they are sexually active, the Safeguarding Protocol must be followed.

15. Harmful Sexual Behaviour

[Peer-on-peer sexual harassment](#) is taken very seriously. 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/education provision 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.

16. Signposting to Services

Learners can access a range of information and advice through –

- Form tutors and heads of year
- The school's well-being team
- Cardiff and Vale School Nursing team
- Cardiff and Vale 'CAT health' text 0752 615718 (age 11 – 10)
- Cardiff YMCA Healthy Relationships service (age 11 – 25)
- Childline
- Meic
- School based counselling

17. Equality Statement

We recognise that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within our communities. This RSE Policy aligns with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must 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*). School provision must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage.

18. Monitoring and Evaluating RSE

The RSE curriculum will be monitored and evaluated every two years to ensure it remains relevant and up to date. We will use the audit tool in Appendix 1 to ensure that it remains relevant and up to date.

19. Access to this Policy

This policy will be located on school websites and be disseminated via communications with parents and via INSET and individual mechanisms in each school.

Parents / carers may request a paper copy of the Policy from the school.

APPENDICES

20. Appendix 1

Success Criteria	<i>Fully in place</i>	<i>Partly in place</i>	<i>Not in place</i>
Leadership and Commitment			
A member of the senior leadership team has overall responsibility for RSE.			
There is a member of staff who coordinates the delivery of RSE.			
There is a named governor for RSE.			
There is an action plan to ensure continuous review and development of the RSE curriculum.			
The school has an up-to-date RSE policy which has been developed by staff in consultation with learners, parents / carers, governors and has been agreed by the governing body.			
Understanding the Needs of Learners and the School Community			
Learners are actively involved in the development of the RSE curriculum.			
The diverse experience of learners, such as vulnerable groups and those with additional learning needs are acknowledged and their RSE needs met.			
The school is aware of the emerging priorities and health needs within the local school community that are pertinent to RSE.			
Engagement			

The RSE policy has been disseminated to all members of the school community, including parents/carers and visitors involved in the delivery of RSE.			
Staff are actively engaged and involved in developing the RSE policy and curriculum provision.			
Parents / carers receive information on their child's learning in RSE.			
Arrangements are in place for parents/carers to view RSE teaching materials.			
Information is provided to support parents / carers in their role as educators of RSE in the home.			
Workforce			
All staff involved in the delivery of the RSE programme receive appropriate training and support.			
RSE is taught by trained, knowledgeable and confident staff.			
Relationships			
The school can demonstrate how it fosters and develops healthy relationships between all members of the school community.			
The school actively promotes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.			
Support Services			
Contributions to RSE by external agencies support and enhance the RSE programme and do not replace teaching by school staff. Visitors comply with school policy.			
Secondary aged learners have access to appropriate local information, support and advice.			
The school actively engages with specialist services e.g. school nurse.			
Learning Environment			

21. Appendix 2 Class Agreement for RSE

Developing a class agreement as part of RSE establishes clear parameters regarding what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole group setting. In turn, this helps to create a balance between learners feeling respected and safe and protecting individual privacy.

Class Agreement

1. We understand that we are all different and have our own opinions and experiences but everyone will be treated with respect.
2. We will not ask personal questions.
3. If we have further questions after the lesson, we will talk to an adult we trust.
4. We will all do our best to challenge prejudice in all its forms.
5. We will use the correct words throughout the lessons.
6. If the teachers/staff believe you are at risk of harm, they have a responsibility to share the information with the Safeguarding Lead. (Personalise with a name of Safeguarding Lead if required)

Please personalise to reflect your class / group.

22 – APPENDIX 3 – EQUALITIES ACT 2010 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

