

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Policy statement:

Relationships and Health Education became compulsory for all primary age children from September 2020. In NHSG's Junior School, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is taught as part of the children's Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. It will also lead onto the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) that is taught at NHSG's Senior School.

Newcastle High School for Girls (NHSG) takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible RSHE to all its pupils as part of the school's PSHE very seriously. NHSG want parents and pupils to feel assured that this learning will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of those being taught.

This teaching is not intended to replace advice or guidance which is received at home, but to supplement and broaden knowledge and understanding.

This policy is drafted by NHSG's Junior School senior leadership team in consultation with the school nurse. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this policy content should they wish to.

Aims of policy:

The focus is on good health, the value of self-esteem in making choices and judgements, the nature of healthy and consensual relationships, and knowledge about how the body works, all within a context of moral issues and values.

The purpose of RSHE is to give the pupils the information to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle and to care and respect their bodies and be able to manage the challenges of growing up and living in the 21st century. We provide them with the right tools to enable them to seek information or support should they need to, both during their school years and beyond.

Provision:

NHSG follows the Department of Education guidance that became compulsory in England from September 2020: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance*. Taught PSHE has also been part of the Independent Schools Standards since 2014.

The NHSG PSHE curriculum is spiral, so that topics can be explored in more depth each year, building on prior knowledge. The RSHE within this delivered in the Junior School puts in place the building blocks for their future learning at the Senior School. Although the topics below are listed specifically, we also treat RSHE as part of the wider PSHE curriculum. NHSG supports equal opportunities in education, seeing it as enabling and encouraging all our pupils to build self-esteem through discussion and activities in a safe environment. We aim to equip pupils with decision-making skills irrespective of gender roles and stereotyping.

The main topics covered in RSHE are:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Facts and risks associated with drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body
- Sex education

As part of the PSHE programme, RSHE is taught by class teachers, with additional support when necessary from the school nurse, using a range of activities with materials and support provided by other professionals as appropriate.

The programme is developed and reviewed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community and meets government guidance.

We ensure that RSHE is age appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.

Staff are given ongoing training on issues related to RSHE including confidentiality, setting ground rules and establishing positive behaviour, handling controversial issues, and responding to questions. We also ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and are familiar with the school policy and guidance relating to RSHE.

Terminology:

Girls will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, as well as slang and everyday terms used in social situations. This will be part of the discussion about what is and what is not acceptable language to be used.

Ground rules are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and staff will use strategies to enable pupils to feel comfortable to ask questions. If controversial questions are asked, the teacher will use their professional judgement about how, or if to answer them and girls will be allowed to raise anonymous questions if preferred.

We recognise that because of the nature of the subject, sensitive and controversial issues are likely to arise. These are dealt with within the framework of the aims of the school and of the RSHE policy as a whole. Any cause for concern will be dealt with in accordance with our pastoral and safeguarding systems.

Guest speakers:

Outside speakers are sometimes used to complement our teaching of this content, who are asked to work within the framework of the school's RSHE policy and adhere to the policy for visiting speakers. A member of NHSG staff will be present throughout these lessons.

Withdrawal from RSHE:

NHSG aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSHE curriculum and urges parents to review this policy. RSHE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports the whole development of the child. Parents have the right to withdraw their daughters from sex education, however, under the new statutory guidance, cannot withdraw their daughter from Relationships Education. Any parents considering withdrawing their daughter should contact the Head or Deputy Head to discuss their concerns. Please note reproduction is covered within the science curriculum, which there is no right to withdraw from.

Review and evaluation:

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and other changes. For this reason, we regularly review our RSHE curriculum. This policy and accompanying schemes of work will be reviewed annually.

Other related policies:

The following whole-school policies support RSHE:

- Safeguarding
- Equal Opportunities
- Discipline and Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety
- Anti-Bullying
- Online Safety
- PSHE Policy

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Review January 2022