



NOWER HILL HIGH SCHOOL

Title:	Relationship and Sexual Education Policy
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Why is Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE) at Nower Hill important?

- It gives students the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives and we strongly believe RSE can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.
- High quality RSE helps create safe school communities in which students can grow, learn and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life.
- RSE plays a vital part in schools fulfilling their statutory duties to protect and safeguard their students. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables students to learn about safety and risks in relationships.
- Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act 2004 to promote their students' wellbeing and under the Education Act 2002 to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. A comprehensive RSE programme can have a positive impact on students' health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.
- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships. Older students frequently say that sex and relationships education was 'too little, too late and too biological'. Ofsted reinforced this in their 2013 *Not Yet Good Enough* report.
- Technology is evolving at a tremendous pace. The need to protect children and young people from inappropriate online content, cyber-bullying and exploitation is a growing concern. A comprehensive RSE programme can support in addressing these issues

Legal Obligations/Guidance

School governors are in law expected to give 'due regard' to the reformed statutory guidance on Relationships and Sex Education (DfEE/2020) which is expected of all secondary schools. The Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This has replaced the previous Sex and Relationships Guidance 2000 and further supplementary guidance entitled 'Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century' (March 2014).

We are legally obliged to have an up-to-date RSE policy that defines RSE and describes the content and organisation of RSE taught in and outside of the Science Curriculum.

Parents and carers have a right to withdraw their children from Sexual Education taught outside the Science Curriculum until three terms before they are 16 in secondary school. Parents and carers may not withdraw their children from Relationships Education or Health Education in secondary school.

Alongside this guidance there are a number of requirements that all schools must adhere to when providing RSE;

- 1) The 2002 Education Act and the 2010 Academies Act sets out the following duties and Ofsted consider the extent to which a school provides such a curriculum:
 - which is balanced and broadly based
 - promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society
 - prepares students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life
- 2) The sex education elements of the National Curriculum Science order are mandatory for all students of secondary school age. This includes students learning about the structure and function of the male and female reproduction system including menstrual cycle. Though not explicitly referred to there is an expectation that teachers will cover sexual health when they teach about reproduction.

Definition: What is high quality relationships and sex education?

“The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.” (DfEE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Draft statutory guidance, February 2019)

At Nower Hill we believe that Sex and Relationships Education:

- should be a partnership between home and school
- ensures children and young people’s views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- ensures a safe learning environment is established, promoting an atmosphere of mutual respect
- starts early and is relevant to students at each stage in their development and maturity
- is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
- includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services. In addition, students will be taught critical thinking skills which will give them the confidence to make appropriate decisions.
- helps students understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation
- is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable fact of life
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- uses active learning methods, and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated
- helps students understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media
- teaches students about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16, and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations.
- promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls’ and boys’ different experiences and needs. This is done through the ‘FIT’ Stonewall resources
- teaches about social norms and that the majority of young people do not have sexual relationships before the age of 16
- support students to manage the pressures to become sexually active until they are ready to enjoy and take full responsibility for a sexual relationship through delay strategy sexual health messages

It contributes to:

- positive ethos and environment for learning
- safeguarding students (Children Act 2004), promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships
- helping students keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice
- reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying

Attitudes and values

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations
- learning the value of marriage, family life and stable relationships
- learning the value of respect, love, care and relationships that are healthy, equal and safe
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- challenge stereotypes and gendered expectations for both boys and girls; this includes the gender expectations of sex portrayed through pornography, and the damage it causes to relationships.
- developing critical thinking, informing part of decision-making process

Nower Hill and Relationships and Sexual Education: Our values and ethos

At Nower Hill we believe that Relationship and Sexual Education covers more than the biological facts and information delivered through science and tries to help young people develop self-esteem, responsibility and the acquisition of skills, understanding and attitudes which prepare students for developing caring, stable relationships. Appreciation of the value of self-respect, dignity, parental duty, marriage and partnership should be encouraged in all students, together with sensitivity of the needs of others.

At Nower Hill we believe that RSE taught through Citizenship should go beyond National Curriculum Science and seek to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students, as well as preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Effective RSE is essential if children and young people are to make safe, responsible and informed decisions about their lives. Children and young people need help and support through their physical, emotional and moral development. RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches children and young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood. RSE builds on knowledge and skills that are particularly important today because of the many different and conflicting pressures on children and young people.

Delivery of Relationship and Sexual Education at Nower Hill

Relationship and Sexual Education at Nower Hill is primarily delivered through Science, Citizenship and Philosophy, Religion and Ethics (PRE).

Nower Hill RSE Scheme of Learning:

Detailed Curriculum maps are available on the school website for each year group. There are three main strands around which the Nower Hill scheme of learning is based:

Knowledge and Understanding

- About physical development at appropriate stages
- About human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- About contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice and support services
- About the reasons and benefits for delaying sexual activity
- About legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality and those outlined in the Equality Act (2010)
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy

Personal and Social Skills

- Understanding characteristics of positive and healthy friendships
- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others
- Learning to make choices based on understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made

- Managing conflict
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation

Attitudes and Values

- The importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- The value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
- The value of respect, love and care
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making
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- **Visitors contributing to RSE**

Although the Head of Citizenship holds responsibility for the RSE curriculum, this colleague also collaborates with other leads in Science, Philosophy, Religion and Ethics, as well as visitors, including our own school nurse and Safer Neighbourhood Officer. In addition, visitors contribute to the RSE programme.

As part of our Year 10 Citizenship scheme of learning, we invite sexual health nurses from the North West London Hospital Trust to teach sessions on issues relating to RSE. All school associated health and other professional and visitors are asked to conform to the following:

- Visitors contributing to RSE will do so at the invitation of Nower Hill and will be qualified to make an appropriate contribution.
- Visitors must agree with the aims of the school in delivering its policy on RSE.
- Visitors must have discussed the content of their contribution with the appropriate member of staff prior to their delivery.
- When visitors are invited, they will be supervised by a teacher, who will be present at all times.
- Visitors will follow the school's safeguarding procedures if a disclosure occurs within the classroom setting.
- Visitors will know and understand where their contribution fits into the school's programme for RSE.

Safeguarding

RSE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. RSE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. State-funded schools have responsibilities for safeguarding and a legal duty to promote pupil well-being (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 38). Updated government safeguarding guidance is now available (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018) and includes a section about being alert to signs that young girls may be at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM). School summer holiday especially during the transition from primary to secondary schools is thought to be a key risk time for FGM.

- **Dealing with sensitive issues**

Teaching lead professionals and organisations advocate that attitudes towards pornography should be brought to the classroom. These organisations include the PSHE Association, The Children's Commissioner, The Sex Education Forum, The TES and Ofsted – as well as parents and young people themselves. In a report by NSPCC, 72% of young people said that porn should be talked about in sex education classes (NSPCC, 2013). 83% of parents of secondary school students want to see issues around pornography addressed in school RSE lessons (NAHT 2013).

Ofsted also concluded in their review of PSHE education 'Not yet good enough' (2012) that relationships and sex education required improvement in over a third of schools. It states that 'in secondary schools... too much emphasis was placed on 'the mechanics' of reproduction and too little on relationships, sexuality, the influences of pornography on students' understanding of healthy sexual relationships, dealing with emotions and staying safe'.

The focus of lessons will be grounded in 'morality' – what is right and wrong, in accordance with the law. The role of the PSHE / Citizenship teacher is to 'facilitate' conversations between students within structured parameters, covering all sides of the debate and to encourage young people to recognise a range of perspectives: from parents, teachers, the law, religious teachings, or the 'agenda' of a moral, theoretical or political ideology.

Not all young people watch pornography, but many do, and attitudes and values associated with pornography are becoming 'normalised' and therefore potentially impact across all groups of young people. We therefore have a moral duty of care to tackle this issue within Nower Hill's Curriculum.

RSE brings students and teachers into contact with contentious issues including contraception, HIV/AIDS, abortion, homosexuality and pornography. The facts behind contraception are taught as part of the Citizenship curriculum at Nower Hill. The aim with these issues is to promote tolerance and resist discrimination, not to promote one particular standpoint or promote one particular sexual orientation. This topic links to the Relationships Unit within the Citizenship curriculum which students undertake in Year 9.

The following are protocols that inform the ground rules for discussion-based lessons:

- Nobody [teacher or student] will have to answer a personal question
- Teachers and other adults should never divulge information of a deeply personal nature
- Discussion should be steered away from references to known individuals
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- The correct names for body parts and sexual behaviour will be highlighted
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
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- **Monitoring, assessment and evaluation of RSE**

The Head of the Citizenship is responsible for RSE. Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the implementation and quality of long term and medium term RSE schemes of work
- Ensuring that all staff within the Citizenship Department are confident in the skills to teach and discuss RSE issues
- Considering the needs of all students, and to achieve this recognise that the school might need to address specific issues.
- Consulting with students to inform provision around RSE
- Accessing appropriate training and liaison with other curriculum areas, particularly science and PRE.
- Monitoring and advising on RSE organisation, planning and resource issues across the school
- Co-ordinating with external providers to ensure their provision meets the outcomes of the planned provision using age appropriate materials
- Liaising with the Deputy Head Student Support and the Student Support team to ensure parents/carers are informed when their children will be taught RSE to support a partnership approach but also that they do have the right to withdraw their child from any RSE that is not part of the National Curriculum Science programme

Parents' rights to withdraw their children

As of September 2020, Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in all secondary schools in England. A parent/carer may wish to withdraw their child from Sex Education but will need to gain permission from the Headteacher. The ultimate decision on whether you can withdraw your child is down to the discretion of the Headteacher. Students may opt into sex education themselves from 3 terms before their 16th birthday; at such a time, parents will not have the option to withdraw their children from Relationships Education or Health Education.

At Nower Hill we emphasise sex education within a social and moral context and we hope that parents will realise the value of such an approach and not request withdrawal of their child. Should they wish to do so, this should be indicated by returning the slip attached to the letter sent out at the beginning of Year 7. A separate letter requesting consent is also sent out before the Citizenship lessons in Year 9; Relationships and Sex Education is the topic to be covered. A parent's choice to withdraw a child from RSE does not affect the child's right to use confidential health services provided at the school or elsewhere.

Equality

Students from all faiths and cultures have an entitlement to RSE. Teaching effective RSE at Nower Hill means being sensitive to the range of different values and beliefs within a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. Schools need to promote all students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to enable them to participate fully in a democratic, modern Britain. It is important when developing the RSE curriculum to work in partnership with parents/carers and the wider community. All families are different so it is important to avoid using language which focuses on the conventional 'mum and dad' family structure and instead talks about families more broadly. LGBTQ students often report that their RSE is solely about heterosexual relationships, or that non heterosexual identities were addressed negatively. Students at Nower Hill are provided with the opportunities to learn about different family structures. When teaching RSE, in particular in relation to partners and sexual health issues we include reference and resources that relate to LGBTQ people.

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic in the 2010 Equalities Act, so our curriculum caters for LGB, transgender and heterosexual students. This also means we have to be proactive in preventing and tackling homophobic and transphobic bullying. At Nower Hill we aim to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations. As such we look to prevent and tackle discrimination and derogatory language, including homophobic and transphobic language.

We recognise that some vulnerable learners such as those with SEND may need more personalised provision in terms of RSE and will ensure that we provide this.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves 'exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/ or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain (this can happen to primary school aged children). In all cases those exploiting the child/ young person have the power over them by virtue of age, gender, intellect, physical strength and /or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common involvement in exploitation relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/ economic and/ or emotional vulnerability. Grooming is the process that coerces a child or young person into providing sexual favours. Child sexual exploitation is the sexual abuse of children'. (National Working Group (NWG) for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (2008)

CSE is part of Nower Hill's Citizenship curriculum. Younger students need to learn that their body belongs to them and that they can say who has access to it. Children need to learn the correct terminology to describe the private parts of their body and know how to seek help if they are abused. These are both key elements in our school's approach to safeguarding. All students are taught about healthy, equal and safe relationships and older students are taught about consent. All students are taught about e-safety and how to keep themselves safe using all technology.

Staff will report any information or disclosure which raises concern that a child or children may be at risk of significant harm to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Sexual Offences Act 2003

The Sexual Offences Act aims to clarify what constitutes a crime of sexual nature against children, young people and adults. The Act does not limit children's right to RSE and sexual health support and advice. The aim of the Act is to protect young people from sexual abuse or sexual exploitation. The Act recognises:

- The legal age for young people to consent to have sex is still 16, regardless of sexual orientation
- Although the age of consent remains 16, it is not intended that the law should be used to prosecute mutually agreed teenage sexual activity between two young people of a similar age, unless it involves abuse or exploitation
- Young people under 16, including those under 13, can continue to seek sexual health and contraceptive information, advice or treatment in confidence

- The law ensures that those providing information and support with the purpose of protecting a young person from pregnancy, STIs, protecting their physical safety or promoting their wellbeing, will not be guilty of an offence
- The aim of the law is to protect the safety and rights of young people and make it easier to prosecute people who pressure or force others into having sex they don't want

Self-taken images – ‘Sexting’

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. In primary and secondary schools there is increasing concern about students taking an indecent image of themselves, or someone taking the image and then sending it to their friends or boy/girlfriend via a mobile phone or some other form of technology. Once these images have been taken and sent to others, control is lost of them and it may not be possible to ever remove them completely. This puts the person in the images in a vulnerable position, as somebody they may or may not know now has these images and could use technology to bully, harass or even try to locate them.

Through the Citizenship Curriculum at Nower Hill students learn that it is illegal to send an indecent picture of a person under 18 on to someone else, even if it is a picture of themselves. If anyone were to have in their possession an indecent image of another minor, they would technically be in possession of an indecent image of a child, which is an offence under the Protection of Children Act 1978 and the Criminal Justice Act 1988.

The present advice for a student if they receive an indecent image or text from someone is not to send this image on to others and to report the offence to CEOP and the school's safeguarding team. The students should speak to a trusted adult. If an indecent image has been posted in the online environment, someone will need to contact the service provider, such as Facebook, or YouTube to have it removed. This can be done by visiting their safety centres and following their reporting links.

If a member of school staff is shown or discovers an indecent image then the device should be confiscated and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school, who will report this to the relevant authorities without viewing it themselves.

We ensure that 'Sexting' is part of the Citizenship curriculum at Nower Hill to ensure students are aware of the legal situation and to address the core issues of safety, privacy, peer influence, personal responsibility and how to seek help. It is part of the school's anti-bullying policy.

The Student Support Team will ensure bespoke support is put in place for students who have been the victim or perpetrator of sexting utilising support from our Safer Schools' Team. As the need arises, they will also arrange year group assemblies or mentor group sessions to address specific issues around sexting.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. FGM is illegal in the UK. It is also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or to help someone trying to do this. At Nower Hill, FGM is explicitly taught to Year 7 and its illegal status is emphasised. FGM assemblies are also given to all Year groups.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Nower Hill recognises the damaging effect of peer on peer abuse and through its work with students, seeks to offer support and strategies to avoid situations which may become abusive. When incidents of peer on peer abuse occur all parents/carers of the students concerned are informed to ensure appropriate support and advice is given.

Forced Marriage (FM)

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights. The Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. This is a separate issue from arranged marriage. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistle-

blowing may come from younger siblings. Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. This issue is taught explicitly in both a cultural and religious context. The value of marriage is explored through discussion both in Citizenship and PRE.

Confidentiality and Disclosures

Nower Hill has a Safeguarding Policy which covers issues relating to child abuse. Procedures for teachers' concerns regarding disclosure of possible sexual abuse can be found in Nower Hill's Safeguarding Policy. RSE can be a sensitive issue. To protect privacy and engender respect for all, teachers will be expected to develop ground rules with students at the onset of work. This will include information on confidentiality and information will be given on where students can get help on personal concerns both inside and outside school. Students should be informed about the remit of confidentiality and that teachers cannot offer or guarantee students unconditional confidentiality. Distancing techniques will be used throughout lessons and all teachers will use question boxes (or similar techniques) to allow students the opportunity to ask further questions anonymously.

If students ask particularly sensitive questions that appear to be inappropriate in the circumstances, teachers will deal with this outside of the lesson but an agreed holding statement will be used for example, 'that is a really interesting question and I need time to think because I want to give you a really good answer' this then allows the teacher to follow a number of options. These include: further questioning of the student with another member of staff present asking them for interpretation of the question they asked. Time to consult with colleagues to construct an appropriate answer, or liaison with the student's family, and obtaining information about where to get further help or, if the matter is considered a potential Safeguarding issue, it should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

It is the responsibility of the school to support its students and to carry out its functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. In fulfilling this duty, they must have regard to guidance around safeguarding. Whilst students have the same rights to confidentiality as adults no student should be guaranteed absolute confidentiality. Staff will report any information or disclosure which raises concern that a child or children may be at risk of significant harm to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then, in line with the School's Safeguarding policy, take action as appropriate. Students will be made aware of the law relating to sexual offences and of those circumstances where confidentiality cannot be maintained.

Links to other Nower Hill Policies

This Policy is closely linked to our PSHEE and Citizenship Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

Review Date:

This Policy will be reviewed every two years.