COGNITA



Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RHSE) Policy

September 2024-25

5 & 7 Diamond Court, Opal Drive, Eastlake Park, Fox Milne, Milton Keynes MK15 0DU, T: 01908 396250, F: 01908 396251, <u>www.cognita.com</u> Registered in England Cognita Limited No 5280910 Registered Office: Seebeck House, One Seebeck Place, Knowlhill, Milton Keynes MK5 8FR

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1 Introduction and aims

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our RSHE Education – Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education supports our school ethos and fulfils our school aims, which are defined as:

This policy applies to all students, including those in the Early Years.

- 1.1 This policy forms part of the curriculum.
- 1.2 We see the curriculum as, 'The total learning experience for our students, which includes not only the taught lessons but also the routines, behaviours, events, activities and other opportunities that our students experience on a daily, weekly and yearly basis in order to ensure that all of them make the best progress possible and attain high standards'.
- 1.3 A well-structured and coherent curriculum is a fundamental element of the tripartite education that underpins all successful schools and includes Teaching, Learning and Assessment (see model below) and is underpinned by Wellbeing.



The aims of RSHE at our school are to:

- 1.4 Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- 1.5 Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- 1.6 Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- 1.7 Create a positive culture around sexuality and relationships.
- 1.8 Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- 1.9 Help students understand that healthy relationships are an important part of wellbeing.

2 Statutory requirements

2.1 Our policy follows the statutory guidance given by the government (DfE) and meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards. Aspects of RSHE are infused within the day to day operation of our school; incorporated through the curriculum, both in content included in subject schemes of work and through other planned learning opportunities in the school. They are captured in our written aims and expressed in the ethos and behaviours of everyone.

2.2 In the Junior School, we must ensure that every registered student who is provided with primary education at the school is provided with relationships education, in accordance with section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Independent School Standards

2.3 In the Senior School, we must ensure that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph 9, in accordance with section 34 of Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Independent School Standards, and with regard to guidance outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At Downsend, we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

3 Policy development

This policy is being developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process will involve the following steps:

- Review The PSHE Lead reviewed all relevant information, including but not limited to, relevant national and local guidance.
- The policy was drafted in accordance with statutory guidance and aligned with the Independent School Regulations. The school curriculum plans were amended accordingly.
- Staff consultation school staff were given the opportunity to review the policy and make recommendations.
- Parent/stakeholder consultation parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy and offer commentary.
- Student consultation students engagement meetings.
- Ratification once amendments were made, the policy was published.
- Policy review this policy will be reviewed in June 2022.

4 Definition

- 4.1 RSHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.
- 4.2 RSHE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

4.3 RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity, sexual orientation, or a specific sexual identity.

5 Curriculum

- 5.1 Our curriculum is based on a mix of JIGSAW and the PSHE Assocoation in the Junior School and mainly on the PSHE Association in the Senior School, but we may need to adapt this as and when necessary.
- 5.2 We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students.
- 5.3 Primary sex education at Downsend will focus on:
 - Preparing boys and girls for the physical and emotional changes that adolescence brings; and
 - How a baby is conceived and born.

It will:

- i. consider the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with SEND/ and an EHC plan;
- ii. not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and
- iii. ensure that discriminatory, extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine.
- 5.4 For more information about our curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2 and our Curriculum Policy

6 Delivery of RSE

6.1 Our RSHE is taught as part of our PSHE curriculum. The PSHE course is delivered to all students through discrete PSHE lessons taught by our teachers. There is one hour-long lesson of taught PSHE over a fortnight and some topics will be supported by form tutors in Formtimes.Elements of the programme may be supported through the bringing in of additional expertise, such as outside speakers, trained health professionals, or the use of teachers with a particular interest or knowledge in a specific area. In addition to these discrete sessions, PSHE is also embedded within the curriculum (e.g. social issues through the teaching of English Literature; Health through Biology and PE; Citizenship through History & RS). There are also specific workshops focused on well-being(Global Be Well Day), Kindness (ARK week) and supporting pupils with aspects of online safety with outside speakers.

In the Junior section at Downsend:

Relationships education at Downsend focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Please see Appendix 1 and 2 for further information on the content of RSHE delivered throughout the school.

- 6.2 For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2 and our Curriculum Policy.
- 6.3 In the Senior section at Downsend:

RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- 6.4 For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2 and our Curriculum Policy.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

7 Roles and responsibilities

Staff & Governance

7.1 **PSHE Lead Teacher**

The person with responsibility for the overview and yearly evaluation of this policy is the Head of PSHE in the Junior and Senior Schools. However, all staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on.

When evaluating the use and impact of this policy, our school leaders will evaluate the extent to which there is evidence of a curriculum which:

- Fulfils the aims of the school;
- Embeds aspiration, attributes and the expectation to achieve high standards and high rates of progress; and
- Provides engagement and excitement for learning.

7.2 **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from (non-statutory) components of RSHE (see section 8).

7.3 Cognita Governance

The Director of Education will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Director of Education will ensure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;

- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

7.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way;
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE;
- Monitoring progress;
- Responding to the needs of individual students; and
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory] components of RSE.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

8 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

8.1 Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Our curriculum is inclusive and our RSHE is accessible for all students. For those pupils with special educational needs or specific learning difficulties, the school has a well-established Learning Support department, led by the Further details of this provision can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy.

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

As set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND, Downsend is mindful of preparing students for adulthood.

Downsend is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. 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. Such factors will be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.

9 Parents' right to withdraw

- 9.1 For further information on RSHE for primary aged children, please follow the link below: <u>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_d</u> <u>ata/file/812593/RSE_primary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf</u>
- 9.2 For further information on RSHE for secondary aged children, please follow the link below: <u>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_d</u> <u>ata/file/812594/RSE_secondary_schools_quide_for_parents.pdf</u>
- 9.3 In the Junior School section at Downsend: Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 4 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

9.4 In the Senior School section at Downsend:

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 4 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

10 Training

- 10.1 Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of our continuing professional development training.
- 10.2 The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

11 Monitoring arrangements

- 11.1 The delivery of RSHE is monitored by Heads of PHSE through: Lesson observations, training support for staff, learning walks, peer coaching and regular team meetings.
- 11.2 Students' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.
- 11.3 Staff teaching PSHE/RSHE during academic year 2024:
 - In the Junior School, lessons are predominantly taught by the Year 3-6 form tutors and overseen by Helen Black.
 - In the Senior School, lessons are predominantly taught by Jo Hawes and is supported by other senior teachers.

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	 That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect
	 those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
	 That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	 How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
	• How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	• The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
	Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
	The conventions of courtesy and manners
	The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
	• That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority
	• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
	What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive
	The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults
Online	That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
relationships	• That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
	• The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
	• How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
	How information and data is shared and used online
Being safe	What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
	• About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe
	• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
	• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
	How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
	How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard
	How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
	Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school, students should know:

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families	That there are different types of committed, stable relationships
	How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children
	• What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony
	Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into
	The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
	• The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting
	• How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship
friendships	Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
	• How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
	• That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs
	• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
	• That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
	What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
	• The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

ΤΟΡΙϹ	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW	
Online and media	Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online	
	• About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online	
	• Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them	
	What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online	
	The impact of viewing harmful content	
	• That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners	
	• That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail	
	How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online	
Being safe	• The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships	
	• How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)	

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW	
Intimate and sexual	 How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship 	
relationships, including sexual health	• That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing	
nealui	• The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women	
	• That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others	
	That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex	
	The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available	
	The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage	
	• That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)	
	• How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing	
	About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment	
	How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour	
	• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment	

Appendix 3: Parent form: Withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS					
Name of child		Class			
Name of parent		Date			
Reason for withdr	awing from sex education with	nin relations	hips and sex education		
Any other informa	tion you would like the school	to consider			
Parant signatura					
Parent signature					

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL Agreed actions from discussion with parents

Appendix 4: DfE RSE Statutory Guidance Suggested Resources

Link to Annex B (page 46) in DfE Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance – Suggested resources:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/ 805781/Relationships_Education__Relationships_and_Sex_Education__RSE__and_Health_Educ ation.pdf

Link to Section 34 of of the Children and Social Work Act 2017:

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/section/34/enacted

Link to Section 403 of Education Act 1996:

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/403

Appendix 5: Initial RSHE Vision Parent letter:

Dear Parents,

You will be aware that, as part of your child's educational experience at Downsend School, we aim to promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive taught programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education that gives children and young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, productive, and fulfilled lives, both now and in the future. I am writing to inform you that, over the next few weeks, starting (date), your child's year group will be taking part in lessons which will focus on relationships and sex education (RSHE).

Lessons in Year --, will include pupils learning about: Healthy Relationships, including friendships; families; growing and changing, including puberty; personal hygiene; changing feelings; becoming more independent; keeping safe; developing self-esteem and confidence. In all year groups we follow the Jigsaw SOW. Please see the website for details of the curriculum overview in all year groups. (here)

This is part of our school's PSHE education programme which is taught throughout the school in every year group and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the staff and Senior Leadership Team. You will find a detailed overview of the school's PSHE/RSHE curriculum on the website (here). All teaching of PSHE/RSHE will take place in a safe learning environment and be underpinned by our school ethos and values. A variety of opportunities will be provided for pupils to ask questions in order to prepare them for relationships of all kinds in the modern world.

We would like to invite you to attend a parent information evening on (TBC) to find out more about what your child will learn, view the materials and resources being used in lessons and discover how you can best support your child to discuss these topics at home. As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents; recent parental feedback has indicated that the overwhelming majority of parents continue to be highly supportive of the relationships and sex education programme. If you would like to find out more or discuss any concerns, we would urge you to attend the information meeting and look forward to seeing you there.

Yours Sincerely, Head of PSHE

Ownership and consultation		
Document sponsor (role) Group Director of Wellbeing		
Document author (name)	PSHE Leads	
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	Alison Barnett, RSL/Danuta Tomasz, DE	
Review – June 2022		

Audience	
Audience	All school staff

Document application and publication		
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Wales	Yes	
Spain	TBC	

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Related documentation	
Related documentation	Curriculum Policy SEND Policy EAL Policy Prevent Duty Early Years Policy, where relevant
	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures Independent School Standards