



# Relationships and Sexuality Policy

*(co-written with Bro Edern cluster schools)*

### **Statement by the Governing Body**

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body in two years to ensure the policy is in alignment with the latest Welsh Government guidance and statutory regulations.

By adopting this policy, the governing bodies of the schools within the Bro Edern Cluster recognise their responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively, that RSE is adequately resourced, staffed and delivered using a cross-curricular approach and ensures that the schools fulfil their legal obligations.

### **Introductory statement**

RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in the education of learners and is essential in supporting learners to achieve the Four Purposes as part of a whole school approach. Helping learners to form and maintain a range of relationships, all based on mutual trust and respect, is at the core of RSE. These relationships are critical to developing emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers learners to understand themselves, take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and form relationships that are fully inclusive, reflecting [diversity](#) and promoting respect.

The Welsh Government 2022 RSE Code contains the compulsory requirements. The teaching and learning within our Cluster RSE programme encompasses the mandatory elements outlined within the Code.

Our Cluster has therefore planned and developed a comprehensive, inclusive, developmentally appropriate whole school teaching and learning programme for RSE which conforms with the Code. This policy details our whole Cluster approach to RSE.

Our Cluster will support learners to develop the knowledge, skills and values to understand how relationships and sexuality shape their own lives and the lives of others. Learners will be equipped and empowered to seek support on issues relating to RSE and to advocate for themselves and others.

The Cluster will ensure that RSE is embedded in the school's values, rights and moral framework e.g. by showing respect for all learners, staff and the wider community, by celebrating differences, building healthy relationships and inclusion of sexual diversity. This will always be considered in the context of pupil ages and will always be appropriate to pupils' ages.

This policy encompasses the Cluster's approach to RSE. It has been approved by the Leadership Team and shared with staff, governors, parents and learners.

This policy is in alignment with the latest Guidance from:

## Welsh Government

- [Curriculum for Wales Guidance](#)
- [The Curriculum for Wales – RSE Code, 2022](#)
- [Keeping Learners Safe](#)

## UK Government

- [Equality Act 2010](#)

This policy is created in conjunction with other policies, including Confidentiality, Safeguarding, Child Protection and the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

### **Right to Withdraw**

RSE is a compulsory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales 2022 for all learners from age 3 to 16 years. It is specified within the RSE Code that there is no right to withdraw learners from any part nor from lessons nor the Cluster provision for RSE.

Here is the timetable for introducing the RSE curriculum within the Bro Edern cluster.

- 2022: RSE will be mandatory in primary the cluster primary Clusters
- 2022: RSE will be mandatory for Year 7
- 2023: RSE will be mandatory for Year 7 and 8 learners
- 2024: RSE will be mandatory for Year 7, 8 and 9 learners
- 2025: RSE will be mandatory for Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 learners
- 2026: RSE will be mandatory for all learners.

### **Curriculum Design**

Our RSE curriculum will be taught through cross-curricular themes and it will be interlinked within all Areas of Learning and Experience as appropriate. This will allow learners to make connections between their learning in RSE and the wider curriculum, understanding historical, cultural, geographic, physical, political, social and technological perspectives and influences on RSE issues.

The mandatory content of the RSE Code is set within three broad and interlinked learning strands, namely:

#### **1. Relationships and identity - this strand focuses on:**

- the range of relationships that human beings have throughout their lives
- how identity can be shaped by our relationships and sexuality
- the importance of human rights in securing healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships in an inclusive society.

#### **2. Sexual health and well-being - this strand focuses on:**

- learning about how living things grow, reproduce and have a life cycle
- developing an understanding of the human body, including people's feelings about their bodies and how these can be represented
- the health issues related to relationships and sexuality
- an understanding of how sexuality and sexual health affects our well-being bearing in mind the age range from 3-16.

### **3. Empowerment, safety and respect - this strand focuses on:**

- learners' rights to safety and protection and freedom from harm and discrimination
- how and where to seek information, help and support
- how to support and advocate or the rights, fair treatment and respect of all.

The themes which are interlinked into the three learning strands between the ages of 3-16 are:

- **Relationships** - Learners will develop an understanding of how different types of safe, consensual, healthy and fulfilling relationships can be formed and maintained.
- **Rights and equity** - Learners will develop an understanding of how rights related to sex, gender, sexuality and relationships contribute to the freedom, equity, dignity, well-being and safety of all people.
- **Sex, gender and sexuality** - Learners will develop an understanding of how aspects of identity and individuality, including LGBTQ+ diversity, sex, gender and sexuality, develop and change over time.
- **Bodies and body image** - Learners will develop an understanding of the human body and how it changes over time, including people's feelings about their bodies, and their sexual and reproductive capacities and functions.
- **Sexual health and well-being** - Learners will develop an understanding of the positive role of sexuality in human life and a gradual awareness of personal sexual health and well-being.
- **Violence, safety and support** - Learners will develop an understanding of the social, emotional, physical and legal nature and impact of gender-based and sexual violence, including online.

Welsh Government, Curriculum for  
Wales Guidance 2020

The learning strands of teaching and learning are set in three broad developmental phases as follows:

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

Our RSE lead will communicate with all primary and secondary cluster schools to ensure effective progression from Phase one, two and three and is developmentally appropriate with all our learners.

The planning, teaching, evaluating and monitoring of the Cluster's RSE programme is undertaken by teachers and the Lead RSE in our Cluster schools.

To ensure that our whole Cluster RSE curriculum is developmentally appropriate we consider a range of factors including learners':

- age, knowledge and maturity
- additional learning needs
- social, physical, emotional and cognitive development and needs
- needs of similar ages may differ.

### **Consultation with learners**

In order to support learners to realise the Four Purposes within the Curriculum for Wales, learner voice is central in developing our RSE curriculum.

To ensure our RSE curriculum meets the needs of our Learners we provide opportunities for them to comment on the Cluster's RSE policy, schemes of work and lesson content by undertaking consultation activities with years 5 – 13 every two years.

We continuously consult with our learners at the end of lessons, activities and programmes in order to ensure appropriateness of our provision and that the resources and outside agencies used are relevant, developmentally appropriate, inclusive and sensitive for learners' needs. We will act upon any recommended amendments as appropriate.

### **Cluster RSE Provision**

This document specifies how we manage, organise and embed RSE throughout our whole Cluster curriculum in alignment with the progression steps within the Curriculum for Wales and the phases within the RSE Code. The resources used are selected for their suitability and are reviewed for their effectiveness following their use by teachers and the lead RSE member of staff and following pupil voice consultations.

### **Safe learning environment**

The individual schools within the Cluster will ensure a safe learning environment for teachers, staff and learners by establishing and agreeing to the school's class agreements/rules.

Learners and staff will be made aware of confidentiality matters and that any safeguarding disclosures will be followed. In the case of matters arising, the policies of the individual schools will be followed, including reporting on school and county systems. Please refer to individual schools' safeguarding policies.

### **Health and wellbeing support services for learners**

Within our RSE provision learners will be informed of appropriate health and wellbeing support services and how to access them.

### **Answering learners' questions**

Our aim is that learners will be encouraged to ask questions about every aspect of their education. Learners will have opportunities to ask regular questions during RSE sessions. We view questions as a positive sign that learners are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others.

Questions will be answered sensitively and in a developmentally appropriate manner for learners.

Our staff will not be expected to answer all questions if they believe some to be inappropriate. They will not be expected to answer any personal questions about themselves and they will not ask learners direct personal questions that could make either party vulnerable. At times, teachers will feel that they need to refer pupils to another adult which may include the parent/carer and if this happens, teachers will try to let parents/carers know with the pupils' permission, or will ask to check whether the matter has had due attention.

### **Working with specialist external agencies**

In order to enhance and enrich our RSE provision, the teaching will occasionally be supported by external agencies (e.g. school nurse, health professionals, NSPCC etc.)

These agencies will be carefully selected and the lead RSE will check:

- They are adequately trained to speak with young people.
- They work/are registered with a reputable organization/charity.
- Their contribution coincides with the aims and objectives of the curriculum.
- The validity of their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) status.
- They have been made aware of any additional needs that some learners may have.
- They have been made aware that a member of the school staff will be present throughout the lesson/activity/presentation.

### **Staff professional development**

Our Cluster recognises that Professional learning is a key requirement for high-quality RSE. The Cluster will facilitate that all teaching and associated members of staff receive appropriate RSE training in order to ensure our whole Cluster RSE programme is effective, includes cross curricular elements, is developmentally appropriate and meets the needs of our learners.

Our Cluster's RSE Leads will support all teaching and associated members of staff to access professional learning opportunities which will assist to develop their confidence, knowledge and skills in RSE.

### **Partnerships with parents/carers and the local community**

The Cluster recognises that parents/carers are crucial to the success of the RSE programme. The Cluster therefore provides opportunities for parents/carers to comment on policy and practice through newsletters and questionnaires. The RSE policy is available to view on the individual schools' websites.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The Headteacher is responsible for delegating the responsibility for monitoring RSE learning and teaching standards.

The Headteacher of the individual schools will ensure that the findings of staff, parents and learner evaluations contribute to the Cluster schools' self-evaluation processes and to the policy review processes.

