

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Welsh Government have now included RSE in the new curriculum for Wales 2022, meaning it is now a statutory part of the curriculum. To guide schools through this work they have released a Relationships and Sexuality Education Code.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Code

This Code contains mandatory requirements and sets out the themes and matters that must be encompassed in RSE. The content is set within the context of broad and interlinked learning strands, namely:

- Relationships and identity
- Sexual health and well-being
- Empowerment, safety and respect

These strands allow schools to design and develop a curriculum tailored to their learners, making connections and developing authentic contexts for learning across the curriculum.

Content appropriate to learner development

The RSE that schools provide must be developmentally appropriate for learners. This means schools must take account of a range of factors including the learner's age; knowledge and maturity; any additional learning needs and anticipating their physiological and emotional development. RSE must be developmentally appropriate for each learner, meaning that learners' needs of similar ages may differ.

The phases have been designed to give practitioners an understanding of what is likely to be developmentally appropriate. For example, in phase 1 (3yrs upwards) and phase 2 (7yrs upwards), learners will be taught about the principles of general consent as pre-requisites for learning about sexual consent at the developmentally appropriate time in phase 3 (11yrs upwards). In practice, this means learners in phases one and two developing an awareness of asking for permission to share materials, for example toys; or learning about respecting personal boundaries.

The phases are designed to help schools and settings make judgements about whether learning is developmentally appropriate for specific learners. This may mean some learners will be ready for specific learning before the broad indications given in the Code, but likewise it may mean that some learners need opportunity for further development before they engage with specific learning. Introduction to a phase may be gradual: with some learning in that phase being developmentally appropriate for learners sooner than other learning. As outlined above, these decisions must be based on a range of factors.

Content and Themes in the Code

The Welsh Government 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; and violence, safety and support. These themes are interwoven into the learning strands.

Across the learning strands, curriculum content in RSE must be inclusive and reflect diversity. It must include learning that develops learners' awareness and understanding of different identities, views and values and a diversity of relationships, gender and sexuality, including LGBTQ+ lives.

Learning about rights and equity runs through all the strands, as well as embedding learning and experience through a rights-based approach to the learning.

If you would like to read the code in full you can find it on the following link: -

<https://gov.wales/curriculum-wales-relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse-code>

We have provided professional learning workshops for our schools in Denbighshire and will continue to support them with ongoing training to ensure they are able to deliver quality RSE for the children in Denbighshire.

Yours sincerely

G W Davies

Geraint Davies

Pennaeth Addysg / Head of Education

