



BRITISH SCHOOL
MUSCAT

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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Definition of RSE

The term Relationships and Sex Education - RSE - is used in this policy to stress that our approach goes beyond the provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, developing self esteem and the skills to manage positive and healthy relationships, now and in the future.

The needs of our students and the role of the school

The overall aims of this curriculum and the English National Curriculum are:

1. To provide opportunities for all students to learn and to achieve.
2. To promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Our policy has been formulated in line with the school's goals for teaching and learning which are:

Everyone in the school, regardless of background or starting point, achieving the highest academic standards.

Equipping students with the values, attitudes and attributes that will serve them well in university, the workplace and all aspects of their life.

Delivering this outcome consistently, year on year, regardless of changes to context or circumstances.

and the [DfE Sex and Relationships Guidance 2020](#) in mind which states:

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. “

“Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.”

At all times, throughout the teaching of RSE, we will ensure that teaching complies where possible with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010

According to the latest DfE “Sex and Relationships Guidance 2020”, RSE should support the following in the curriculum:

“All of this content should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils’ ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.”

“These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others’, wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society. “

We believe that in order for students to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, they need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Students can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

It is based on the above values that we have written this policy and produced an RSE curriculum to be taught across the Primary and Senior Schools.

This policy also sets out the rights of parents to withdraw students from sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education) and the process that the Head of School should follow in considering a request from a parent. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Delivery of RSE

Relationships and Sex Education is one of many strands of the PSHE programme. It will be delivered to all years, from EYFS to Year 13. Some aspects of Relationships and Sex Education will be covered in Science, as per the English National Curriculum.

Students are generally taught in mixed gender, single year groups. The students will be taught by a team of staff, who will receive support and training where necessary, in the Relationships and Sex Education aspect of the PSHE programme. For some gender specific lessons, boys and girls may be taught separately.

In the Primary School PSHE is taught across the school in weekly timetabled slots. From FS1 through to Year 4 children are taught about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This is continued in Year 5 and, in addition, we teach children about the emotional and physical changes that occur due to puberty. In Year 6 we draw on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in science lessons to explain how a baby is conceived and born.

In the Senior School, a specialised programme of PSHE is delivered to KS3 in a timetabled slot. Each year within their PSHE programme Year 7, 8 and 9 students will receive a block of 6, 65 minute lessons on Relationships and Sex Education. These lessons will tie in to the work that the students cover elsewhere in the curriculum: for example Science and MFL

KS4 and KS5 will receive Relationships and Sex Education via PSHE timetabled lessons built into their curriculum time.

Aims of the programme

The aim of Relationship and Sex Education within the school is to provide information on developing healthy relationships, physical change including growth and puberty, the importance of consent, sexual health choices for the future and risk taking behaviour, including online safety. This is heavily underpinned by relationship education which promotes discussion and thought into the different emotions and values involved in healthy relationships, with particular regard to the importance of loving and stable relationships, such as marriage. Through this we aim that our students lead confident and healthy lives by making the right informed choices for themselves when the time comes.

Sensitive Issues

Controversial topics may arise and, in all cases, teaching staff will remind students about the laws in Oman and abide by these laws when taking part in any discussion. They may refer to laws in other countries too, such as the UK, in order that students are aware of the laws in Oman and elsewhere to ensure that students are protected in their futures and future choices.

In the UK, it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic. There are nine protected characteristics. Some of these cannot be addressed in Oman. Please see the table below for those areas that can and cannot be discussed.

Protected Characteristics that can be discussed in Oman	Protected Characteristics (or aspects within certain characteristics) not for discussion in Oman
1. Age	
2. Disability	
3. Marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Civil partnership including same-sex marriage
4. Pregnancy and maternity including miscarriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pregnancy and maternity outside of marriage ● Sex outside of marriage ● Termination and abortion

5. Race	
6. Religion or belief (acknowledgement and acceptance of all)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explicit teaching or promotion of comparative religions other than Islam ● Criticism of Islam ● Muslims participating in alternative religious practises
7. Sex - gender equality and sexual discrimination	
	8. Gender reassignment
	9. Sexual orientation

Creating a safe, yet controlled, teaching environment is vital for RSE and therefore teachers establish a set of ground rules so that our students are aware of parameters.

Where a question is raised regarding an issue that cannot be discussed (see table above) staff will respond with the following or a similar phrase:

"I acknowledge that this is an issue that may concern you, however I am sorry but we are unable to talk to you about XXX due to Omani laws."

Staff may be able to provide some pastoral support and concerns will be raised to the pastoral team should the need arise.

Ground Rules

Ground rules are introduced at the beginning of the year in PSHE lessons and are re-visited when RSE is addressed.

Ground rules help to minimise unintended disclosures, disclosures at inappropriate times or comments of a negative nature made towards other pupils (whether intentional or not). Such ground rules support broader classroom rules and the school's behaviour policy.

To be effective, pupils and teachers should develop ground rules together at the start of each unit, re-visit them at the start of every lesson and apply them in all discussion and group activities, amending them as necessary. They should either be displayed or added to the start of the Slides used for each individual lesson.

Key ground rules that must be included:

- respecting others
- listening to others
- not asking personal questions or putting people 'on the spot'
- not making assumptions about other people
- having the right to 'pass' if you do not wish to comment
- use correct terms for body parts and activities

- use inclusive language

Relationships and Sex Education, as part of the PSHE Curriculum

Relationships and Sex Education became mandatory in UK schools from September 2021 and therefore, following UK best practice, we have written a Scheme of Learning for Primary and Senior School students to follow as part of our PSHE curriculum. The lessons have been taken from material suggested by the PSHE Association, Medway and the NSPCC. All materials have been adapted to be age appropriate for our students and also amended to fit into the context of Oman.

Working with Parents regarding Child Withdrawal procedures

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of the RSE section of the PSHE Curriculum. Students may not be withdrawn from the Relationships section of this curriculum, nor can they be withdrawn from the Biology sections of the Science Scheme of Learning that teaches reproduction.

Primary School

Parent meetings will be held in advance of any RSE unit being delivered. At this stage, parents will have the opportunity to opt to withdraw their children from the lessons and will inform the class teacher and year leader. Primary staff will ensure students are supervised and alternative provision is provided while these lessons take place.

Senior School

Requests may be made to the Head of School who will notify the PSHE coordinator. Before granting any such request, the parent and Line Manager of PSHE will discuss the reasons that the parent would like to withdraw their child as well as the potential benefits of the child staying in the RSE lessons. Should the parent still wish for their child to be withdrawn, the parent may request to the Head of School to formalise this request. Should the request be accepted, then the PSHE Co-ordinator will ensure that the class teachers are aware of the removal.

A copy of the request will be linked to CPOMS (our safeguarding software) in order that there is a record of this request. The parent will understand that alternative curriculum provision is not available for their child, however the child may bring independent work with them to complete during this allocated lesson and a safe, supervised space will be found for the student.

Confidentiality

The school aims to support students but no individual member of staff will guarantee a student absolute confidentiality. It may be necessary if a child protection issue arises that certain details of a conversation must be passed on.

If a child demands a higher level of confidentiality than they feel they can obtain from members of staff at school, then they will be advised of external agencies or websites of support that they can go to.

However, if a child is at risk, all adults have to pass this information on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school and in these circumstances total confidentiality cannot be maintained but all actions taken will be with the child's best interest at heart and information shared on a 'need to know' basis.

Any situation which indicates knowledge about sex or sexual activity which is inappropriate for the pupil's age should be recorded on CPOMS and directed to the DSL.

For further information related to anything linked to Confidentiality and Safeguarding, please see our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the Relationships and Sex Education programme will take place at the end of each year, using feedback from both students and members of staff via a quality assurance process. At this time local, national or international issues or changes in legislation will be considered to ensure that the curriculum content fits the needs of the students receiving it.

Primary and Senior colleagues reserve the right to plan a lesson or assembly based on Relationships and Sex Education, should the need arise.

Any need for staff training will also be assessed.

Equal opportunities

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. We strongly believe that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the school's approach to RSE will take account of:

The needs of boys as well as girls

"Boys are less likely to talk to their parents about sex and relationships" (DfES 2000).

Girls tend to have greater access to RSE than boys, both through the media (particularly teenage magazines and websites) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Different ethnic, religious and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

Varying home backgrounds

We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

The Relationships and Sex Education policy will be reviewed annually and in line with BSM best practice.

Appendix 1

Relationships and Sex Education Scheme of Learning

The content of the series of lessons is such that students are able to develop their knowledge of key issues as they progress through each year. Where the same topic is taught to multiple year groups e.g. consent and healthy relationships; appropriate tasks are created so that students are able to assess previous learning and develop a new level of understanding and skills. The programme has been created so there is no repetition in any scheme of learning and all tasks are age and ability appropriate to engage learners and ensure progression.

Another reason for the spiral curriculum is that we have many students who do not remain with us for the whole of their school career and therefore we ensure that they are taught about aspects of Relationship and Sex Education during their time with us.

Any lesson with a * next to it, is a lesson that parents may request withdrawal, following the process outlined in the policy.

Primary School

EYFS - Year 4

RSE is covered through the PSHE and science curricula. The main focus areas are positive relationships, changes, growth and life cycles of plants and animals.

Before the Year 5 and 6 RSE content is taught, all parents are invited to a Question and Answer session where lesson objectives and resources are shared with parents.

Year 5

Relationship education will continue to be a significant theme through PSHE lessons in Year 5 and 6. In addition, the following specific lessons will be delivered with a focus on puberty.

Lesson 1 *	The parts of the body and how they work
Lesson 2 *	What will happen to their bodies during puberty
Lesson 3 *	About the importance of personal hygiene during puberty
Lesson 4 *	How and why emotions may change during puberty

Year 6	
In Year 6 we continue to learn about positive relationships, recap the subject of puberty and then learn about human reproduction.	
Lesson 1*	More about the changes that happen at puberty (recap from year 5)
Lesson 2*	About managing change — new roles and responsibilities as we grow up. Changing friendships
Lesson 3*	About what constitutes a positive, healthy relationship and that relationships can change over time
Lesson 4 *	About human reproduction (how a baby is made and how it grows)

Senior School

Year 7	
Relationships and Sex Education - this series of lessons are to look at changes in the body and to introduce the idea of consent, linked to healthy relationships.	
Lesson 1	Puberty
Lesson 2	Introducing consent
Lesson 3	Commitment
Lesson 4	Anti - bullying (updated each year based on Anti-Bullying Week materials -
Lesson 5	Positive relationships

Year 8	
Relationships and Sex Education - this series of lessons build on the necessity of consent and also looks at self esteem and equity in positive relationships.	
Lesson 1	Media and body image
Lesson 2	Managing risks - link to positive relationships
Lesson 3	Consent
Lesson 4	Equality in relationships
Lesson 5	Gender stereotypes / equality

Year 9	
Relationships and Sex Education - this series of lessons is more explicit about the importance of safe, healthy, committed and equal relationships as well as the risks that students may be exposed to online.	
Lesson 1	Digital safety
Lesson 2	Sexual exploitation and grooming -
Lesson 3	Committed relationships, marriage and forced marriage
Lesson 4	Committed relationship responsibilities - parenting
Lesson 5	Anti - bullying - linked to sexualised behaviour

Year 10	
In Yr 10, there are 2 rotations of 6 lessons per PE class, therefore all PSHE themes will be included in 12 lessons across the academic year.	
Subjects like fertility, contraception and STI's are taught through Science, therefore this rotation looks at transition to KS4, Mental Health and Relationships and Sex Education.	
Lesson 1	Transition and changing relationships
Lesson 2	Mental Health - linked to positive relationships
Lesson 3	Consent - avoiding assumptions
Lesson 4	Anti - bullying -
Lesson 5	Positive relationships -

Year 12	
Relationships and Sex Education - 1 term of lessons	
Lesson 1	Positive relationships
Lesson 2 *	What is consent - linked to physical relationships
Lesson 3	My values, linked to consent and choices
Lesson 4	Anti - bullying - withdrawing consent
Lesson 5	Sharing sexual images

Year 13	
Relationships and Sex Education - 1 term of lessons	
Lesson 1 *	Capacity to Consent - linked to alcohol
Lesson 2	Consent - linked to harassment / stalking
Lesson 3	Anti - bullying
Lesson 4	Online relationships
Lesson 5 *	Pornography