

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Approved by:	Rachel Thompson	Date: 14.01.22
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Next review due by:	January 2024
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Aims

Queensmill College is an autism specific provision which meets the needs of young people aged 19-25. Given the complexity of their autism, students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying, and other issues. Therefore, it is imperative that students have access to learning which focuses on body awareness, relationship development, and keeping safe.

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at Queensmill College are to:

- › Prepare young people for the physical changes in their own bodies and provide them with an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- › Help young people understand their emotions and those of others
- › Help young people develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- › Support young people in developing positive and healthy relationships with others
- › Support young people in keeping themselves safe

We aim to develop their concept of what is expected and unexpected, through the SoSAFE! Programme and real-life contexts, with a strong emphasis on the positive. In the classrooms students are encouraged and supported to build social skills and professional relationship skills in real life environments such as community-based activities and work experiences.

Statutory requirements

Queensmill College provides education for young people aged 19-25. We do not have to follow the National Curriculum and instead follow the preparing for Adulthood Curriculum..

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At Queensmill College we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of young people, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

The focus is on Relationships Education helping young people understand appropriate social interactions within different groups of people in their lives, and we introduce and explore the different levels of intimacy that are appropriate with those groups of people.

Delivery of RSE

Many aspects of RSE are addressed through the SoSAFE! Programme, which is highly individualised and addresses young people's needs allowing group and 1:1 sessions to promote a safe and trustworthy environment as/ if needed. It also promotes on-line safety educating young people about the risks and guiding them how to use on-line media in a safe way.

The SoSAFE! Programme:

- educates our vulnerable young people about relationships and social safety
- gives them a set of rules for different relationships in order to help them understand when a behaviour in a relationship is expected/ unexpected.
- provides them with the tools to help them identify potentially abusive situations and who they can report this to
- offers own highly individualised 'My People and Relationship Book', which identifies different groups of people in their lives and associates them with a set of behaviours which are appropriate for a given group e.g. family, teachers, class peers, friends, girlfriend/ boyfriend, strangers, etc.
- shows the level of verbal and physical intimacy acceptable within a given relationship
- emphasizes that some behaviours may be a subject to consent.
- teaches about steps to a relationship helping children and young people understand how to move into an intimate relationship in a safe and measured manner.

RSE is taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some young people may have a different structure of support around them (for example: those in supported living).

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Head of College to account for its implementation.

The Head of College

The Head of College is responsible for ensuring that RSE is embedded within the PfA curriculum, and for managing requests to withdraw young people from non-statutory components of RSE.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual children and young people
- Responding appropriately to young people 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 RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Head of School.

All teachers are responsible for teaching RSE in Queensmill College.

Children and Young People

Children and young people are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE through the SoSAFE! Programme as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The SoSafe! Programme is a tool for teaching autistic young-people about sex and relationships and for helping them reliably communicate about relationships.

It focuses on the teaching of the appropriateness of physical and emotional interaction and the different types of relationships young people may encounter.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team through:

Learning walks, informal observation and mentoring.