



MacIntyre
Providing support...your way



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

“Celebrating Individuality, Promoting Innovation and Being Inspirational”

Achieving Beyond Expectations

Reviewed & Updated: July 2021
Review date: July 2023

“By definition, exceptional students require an extraordinary response from educators – something different from the ordinary, even if the ordinary is good.....” (Kauffman, 2002,259)

At MacIntyre School we recognise that all young people need and are entitled to Relationships and Sex Education that will prepare them for the pleasures, complexities, risk and realities of life. We are committed to teaching our students to develop their understanding of their own sexuality and building relationships through engaging them in Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship (PSHE and C) based learning.

We are dedicated to providing high standards of teaching and learning and a curriculum that is tailored to the needs of each individual, so that we provide our children and young people with the knowledge, understanding and information that is relevant to their experiences and choices. We always take into account and respect the views of the individual.

We seek to work with parents and where relevant and possible to respect cultural, religious and family values. We aim always keep the needs of our children and young people at the centre of our decision making and educational planning. Should this bring us into conflict with their families cultural beliefs or values we vow to work with the family and all the relevant agencies in order to reach consensus where possible. Should this not be feasible we will work to meet the needs of the child / young person within the acceptable ethical and moral framework.

Definitions

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at MacIntyre School covers: emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up; building relationships; enabling individual's to recognise and be confident with their sexuality; promoting sexual health. We recognise that we have an important duty to ensure that all our children are properly included in Relationships and Sex Education regardless of their special educational needs or disability.

At MacIntyre School we believe that Relationships and Sex Education should be:

- An integral part of lifelong learning
- An entitlement for boys, girls; those who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay .bisexual, transgender or gender neutral; those with physical, learning or emotional difficulties; those with a religious or faith tradition
- Provided within a holistic context of emotional and social development.

The main purposes of RSE are to help children and young people to be safe, healthy and happy as they grow up and in their future lives,

RSE must always be appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development.

Aims

We aim to:

- Meet each individual student's differing needs and abilities, preparing them for adult life.
- Help students to develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Support them through their physical, emotional and moral development.
- Develop student's awareness of their bodies and body changes, using correct biological terminology and whatever resources are required to support understanding.
- Promote the culture that we are all sexual beings who have the right to satisfying sexual experiences and relationships.

- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Enable our students to develop the knowledge, understanding and communication skills in order to facilitate personal decision making.
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Establish a clear understanding for all staff to promote a synchronized approach for students with SEND.
- Learn about the nature of friendship and how to make and keep friends
- Learn how to manage friendships and relationships confidently and to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Key Principles

- All students at MacIntyre School, regardless of cultural and religious beliefs are sexual beings.
- All students at MacIntyre School have the right to be taught Relationships and Sex Education which is individualised to their level of understanding and their personal needs.
- MacIntyre School does not discriminate against people on grounds of their sexuality, and staff will not make value judgments about children and young people's personal relationships or sexual behaviour.
- We adopt a whole school, multi-disciplinary, holistic approach which merges RSE (especially Relationships) into the curriculum as a whole.
- At MacIntyre School we will involve our children and young people in decisions made around their Relationships and Sex education. Where the child lacks the capacity to be involved in decisions a Best Interest Meeting will be held, including a multi – disciplinary team.
- Where a person is expressing any desire for illegal or potentially abusive activity (for example a sexual attraction towards a child), or their previous behaviour indicates that this is likely, then in all cases appropriate advice will be sought through the Sex and Relationship Education Forum, through the relevant referral process (Appendix 1).
- We involve all staff in understanding and developing the RSE Scheme of Work, even though not all staff might be teaching RSE. Macintyre School has a designated lead to manage the RSE curriculum development and delivery, and who then has oversight of its effectiveness and development.
- Staff will be provided with relevant RSE training in line with current legislation and subject to review as and when changes occur. Individual workshops will be provided to teams as required. This also includes Safeguarding, using appropriate materials for teaching and how to deal with potential disclosures made by students during RSE lessons.

Approach:

Macintyre School as a setting for learners with complex learning needs requires a high level of flexibility within the RSE curriculum to be able to personalise this to each learners' individual needs.

We agree that 'Teaching Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to children, young people and adults with severe learning difficulties (SLD) will be very, very different to teaching RSE to neuro-typical conventionally developing learners.'

'It is not possible to take standard curriculum models, such as those proposed by the Sex Education Forum and the DfE and apply them wholesale to those with SLD however much they might be differentiated.' (RSE Semi-Formal Scheme of Work)

All learners at Macintyre School have RSE lessons based on the Equals RSE Semi-Formal Scheme of Work, however due to the flexibility of this Scheme of Work more formal or pre-formal aspects can be included depending on individual needs.

At Macintyre School we ensure that the RSE subject is taught:

1. Holistically, understanding that this Scheme of Work will tie in directly to others, particularly those within the Equals Semi-Formal Curriculum but especially, to *My Communication, My Play and Leisure, My Independence, My Thinking and Problem Solving, My Drama, My Dance, and My Art.*

2. Using repetition and over learning. That is, that neither Relationships Education nor Sex Education are open to being taught as a topic, or to be covered at periodic intervals. The extreme difficulties that the vast majority of children, young people and adults will have with both Relationships and Sex, and the constant changing of individual circumstances as they grow and mature, demands that Relationships involves lifelong learning and Relationships and Sex Education is taught as a weekly discrete 'subject' throughout every year from at least Year 6/7 onwards.

3. Accepting that what is being taught is appropriate to the individual learner's age and developmental level, and that learners do not need to be taught what they do not need to know. That is, Relationships and Sex are by their nature, both abstract and complex. Lessons learned can (and will) be easily forgotten if they are irrelevant to the individual at the time of teaching

Relationships Education is compulsory in England for all children in all age settings, and Para 69 of England's Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers states that

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship..... It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed. (DfE, 2019, p25)

Sexual relationships are addressed in the curriculum, but not until the individual learner has developed a sexual identity and has shown an interest in developing sexual relations with others.

4. Permanently, with special consideration to next educational destinations. It is likely that many, if not most, with SLD will not have formed close, potentially sexual relationships by the time they leave school at 19. Macintyre School is committed

therefore to liaise closely with next educational or residential destinations to pass on the work done so far. **The Equals Semi-Formal Curriculum has been deliberately designed as a 2 to 92 curriculum, with exactly this purpose in mind.**

Responsibilities

Trustees

- Ensure the school meets the RSE needs of the children and young people by managing resources, mitigating risk and checking if we are operating within financial limits.

Local Advisory Board (LAB)

- To ensure the policy is in place and regularly reviewed and conforms with legislation and statutory guidance.
- To maintain a strategic overview in ensuring that the policy is consistently implemented.
- To approve the allocation of resources to ensure successful RSE delivery.

Director of Education, children and Young People responsibilities

- To ensure Relationships and Sex Education policy reflects MacIntyre's corporate policies and values.

Head of Education and Senior Leadership Team responsibilities

- To oversee and monitor the implementation of this policy and the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum within the school
- Make recommendations for improvements or changes to policy where needed and communicate this with wider teams and the LAB
- To supervise RSE forum referrals
- To appoint a designated person to lead at the RSE forum meetings
- To ensure that there are relevant assessments and intervention plans in place for all those students who require them
- To ensure all staff have been provided with appropriate training to implement the policy

RSE forum members' responsibilities

- RSE forum to consist off a member of staff representing each department (e.g. residential, education, health, senior leadership)
- To take on any referrals
- To allocate a person to find more information for the referral
- To arrange a Multidisciplinary Meeting with relevant people

Health and Therapy Team responsibilities

- To be involved in sex and relationship policy implementation
- To take part in RSE forum meetings
- To assess, recommend and oversee the implementation of appropriate communication, strategies and resources used for individual student's RSE learning programmes.
- To work as part of the "Team Around the Child" to set appropriate targets to develop understanding of personal physical development; the concepts of private and public; knowledge and awareness of sexuality and relationships.
- To work as part of a multi-professional team to ensure the best interests of the children and young people are always taken into account
- To train, support and role model best practice to all staff.

Teachers, residential Team Leaders and senior staff

- To follow and implement policy and procedure, ensuring their teams have the understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- To follow and implement a 3 year RSE curriculum plan providing appropriate information and resources to the need of individual students
- To work as part of the “Team Around the Child” to set appropriate targets to develop understanding of personal physical development; the concepts of private and public; knowledge and awareness of sexuality and relationships.
- To ensure all documentation and resources in place for individuals are in date, followed, evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis
- To attend RSE forum meetings for each child or young person they have responsibility for.
- To attend training, provide feedback and put their learning into practice
- To help our students to understand as much as possible about the policies in place around them and their rights and responsibilities

Responsibilities of Staff (Learning Support Assistants, Support Workers, Relief and Agency Staff)

- To follow this policy and procedures and report if there are concerns or they feel that plans need amending
- To read, sign and follow RSE learning programmes, guidance and support strategies in for each child and young person
- To be considerate, sensitive and confidential when discussing children and young people’s private needs
- To work as part of “Team Around the Child” to implement appropriate learning programmes, procedures and strategies across school and residential settings
- To attend training and put their learning into practice
- To contribute to meetings and supervisions

Children and young people’s responsibilities

- To share their views and preferences about their learning and support where appropriate and possible to do so
- To follow MacIntyre School rules and contribute to their learning
- Respect the views of others

Parents and carers responsibilities

- To become familiar with MacIntyre School RSE policy and express their own views
- To inform MacIntyre School of any concerns regarding their child’s RSE
- To attend and contribute at RSE forum meetings where appropriate

Role of teaching staff

- **Staff as teachers** MacIntyre School offers RSE training as well as dedicated staff meetings addressing the teaching of RSE. Staff need to be competent, and feel comfortable with, setting up and running structured programmes covering RSE. It can be very challenging talking openly about sexual matters in an easy, relaxed manner, and we recognise this is not something everyone can do.
- **Staff as counsellors.** Irrespective of the structured programme on personal relationships, some individuals with learning difficulties will need individual or pair counselling about aspects of their lives. This may require expertise from outside the school in particular cases.

- **Staff as protectors.** As a group, people with severe learning difficulties are likely to have increased vulnerability to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, mainly because of likely communication and social difficulties making them an easier target to manipulate for those who are unscrupulous. It is also likely that the group as a whole will have a higher predisposition towards sexual experimentation and persuasion, because they are less likely to fully develop the strong social limiters of neuro-typical children and teenagers. **It is really important to consider here, that sexual exploitation and abuse is much more likely to come from those who the learners know well, and this is especially so the more complex their learning difficulties are.** Being trusting, open and immediately friendly are wonderful characteristics, but they create vulnerability. All adults therefore, and not just those who are staff members, have a responsibility towards the personal integrity and safety of individuals with complex needs within their own institution.
- **Staff as interveners.** Where a particular sexual behaviour brings a person with a learning difficulty into conflict with legal boundaries and societal boundaries, it may be necessary for staff to intervene and re-direct the learner away from a potentially complex situation. This cannot be simply stopping the learner from doing something. The learner has to be taught a better way.
- **Staff as empowerers.** Enabling all learners by a process of encouragement, facilitation and the imparting of skills to exercise power over their own lives and to make their own choices at their own pace.

Safeguarding

At Macintyre School the Designated Safeguarding Lead and DSOs are involved with the planning and teaching of RSE. RSE is regularly discussed during multidisciplinary and team meetings to address issues related to safeguarding that may arise during RSE lessons. All staff are familiar with the safeguarding policy and know how to proceed should any student make a disclosure during a RSE lesson. It is important for staff to understand the risks of addressing certain topics but, if relevant for the students, the risks should not stop staff from providing the appropriate and relevant lessons.

Any sexual activity between a member of staff and a person we support is illegal and will be treated as criminal behaviour, irrespective of any apparent consent (Sexual Offences Act 2003). **This would also include taking and sharing explicit photos of students, or exposing students to explicit images.**

Any allegation made by students or staff related to sexual relationships will be pursued following our safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Staff adhere to the regulations set in the Data Protection Act (1998) with regard to confidentiality and an individual's right to privacy, balanced with the need to ensure they are safeguarded at all times.

The RSE Curriculum - The Equals Semi-Formal Scheme of Work for RSE

Serious consideration will be taken to determine what and is taught and how for each individual to ensure that the teaching is appropriate. The core curriculum is divided up into six sections:

1. Knowing my body
 - Body parts and what they are called
 - Their functions - what the parts do
 - Age differences

- Gender differences
 - My clothes – on top and underneath
 - Menstruation
 - The physical manifestations of a sexual state
 - Masturbation
 - Hygiene.
2. Knowing me
 - What I like and what I don't like
 - Who I like and who I don't like
 - What I am able to do and what I find difficult
 - Trusting somebody – who can I trust?
 - Me, you and us
 - Developing a positive image and high self-esteem.
 3. Private and public
 - Where on my body is private?
 - Where on my body is not private?
 - Where can I be by myself?
 - Where can I go to be private?
 - Where can I spend time with other people?
 - My room.
 4. Touching and allowing others to touch me
 - Where on the body can I touch another person appropriately?
 - Gaining permission to touch
 - Where is it inappropriate to touch?
 - Resisting pressure and saying 'no'
 - Saying 'yes'?
 - Making choices.
 5. Forming relationships
 - What does a relationship mean?
 - Liking somebody and loving somebody
 - Dating
 - Having a girlfriend/boyfriend
 - Same sex relationships
 - Compliments
 6. Sexual intimacy with another person
 - The sexual act
 - The recognition that tenderness, care and empathy are key components of any sexual act with another
 - Safe sex
 - The possible consequences of unsafe sex.

Additional information to consider:

The Equals RSE Semi-Formal Scheme of Work has a vast amount of literature regarding legal aspects of some of the RSE topics. The recommendations made by Equals regarding the teaching of these topics have been provided with learners with SLD in mind and take into account the difficulties as well as the most up to date studies in the SLD field. At Macintyre School we believe it is important for the RSE teaching staff and RSE forum to take these reflections into consideration when addressing any of the following topics:

- Teaching the concept of consent – pg. 8 and pg. 13

- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender - LGBT) – pg. 7
- Sexually Transmitted diseases – pg. 8
- Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour – pg. 8
- Internet safety and pornography – pg.9
- Physical health and mental well-being – pg. 9

Criteria for Success

- The policy reflects all relevant legislation, guidance and best practices.
- There is clear evidence that Sex and Relationship Education is being taught at school and in the children’s and young people’s homes.
- Individual students, showing inappropriate sexualised behaviour, are being referred through appropriate referral process to RSE forum
- All educators feel confident in implementing RSE policy and curriculum as demonstrated through their feedback to Line Managers during supervision
- The policy is reviewed and revised within timescales

Links to other policies

MacIntyre School policies:

- Safeguarding Policy,
- On-Line Safety Policy,
- The Anti – Bulling and Policy,
- The Complaints Policy,
- PBS Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Curriculum Policy

Relevant legislation and guidance:

- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (DfE – July 2020)
- Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (2015)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Children Act (2004)
- Equality Act (2010)

Additional Documents:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- MacIntyre’s Good practice guidance for Personal Relationships and Sexuality – policy for Adults
- MacIntyre School’s Sex and Relationships curriculum and planning.

Updated July 2021

