Cyfarthfa High School

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

POLICY DATE

September 2026

SCHEDULED REVIEW

September 2027

Policy Lead

Lee-Anne McCarthy | Lead Practitioner Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Approval date 08.10.26

Approval

Role	Name and signature	Date
Chair of Governors	D. Williams	08.10.26
Headteacher	B. Davies	08.10.26
Designated SLT member	L. McCarthy	08.10.26

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

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1. Introduction

At Cyfarthfa High School, we recognise that high-quality Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an important part of supporting the health, well-being, safety and personal development of all learners.

Our RSE curriculum aims to equip learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to develop healthy and respectful relationships, understand themselves and others, make informed decisions and recognise when and how to seek support.

RSE is approached positively and inclusively and is taught in a manner which is appropriate to the developmental needs of our learners.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Equality Policy, Online Safety Policy and Curriculum Policy.

2. Statutory Framework

Relationships and Sexuality Education is a mandatory element of the Curriculum for Wales.

The school's RSE provision is designed in accordance with:

- the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021;
- the Curriculum for Wales statutory guidance;
- the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Code;
- the Equality Act 2010;
- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC);
- relevant Welsh Government safeguarding and equality guidance.

The school will ensure that its curriculum and teaching and learning encompass the mandatory learning set out within the RSE Code.

RSE will be developmentally appropriate for individual learners and will take account of learners' age, knowledge and maturity, as well as their additional learning needs and social, physical, emotional and cognitive development.

3. Our Aims

Through RSE, we aim to support learners to:

- develop healthy, safe and respectful relationships;
- recognise the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships;
- understand the importance of consent, personal boundaries and mutual respect;
- develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others;
- understand physical, emotional and social changes associated with growing up;

- develop appropriate knowledge of sexual health and well-being;
- understand different identities, relationships and family structures;
- recognise and challenge discrimination, prejudice, harassment and harmful behaviours;
- understand how relationships and sexuality may be represented and influenced by society, culture, media and online environments;
- understand their rights and responsibilities and respect the rights of others;
- recognise situations which may place themselves or others at risk;
- develop the confidence and knowledge to seek appropriate advice, support and help.

Our RSE curriculum contributes to our wider school commitment to ensuring that all members of the Cyfarthfa community are Ready, Respectful and Safe.

4. Curriculum Content

Our RSE curriculum is organised around the three interconnected strands identified within the statutory RSE Code:

Relationships and identity

Learners will progressively develop their understanding of relationships, identity, communication, feelings, behaviours, diversity and how people relate to one another. This includes healthy and unhealthy family, friendship, romantic and sexual relationships; effective communication, decision-making, conflict resolution and refusal skills; and how to speak out about harmful behaviour.

Learning will include the diversity of relationships, including marriage and civil partnerships; how relationships and identities are shaped by biology, technology and social, cultural and religious influences; and how norms, attitudes, laws and human rights relating to sex, gender and sexuality vary across societies and over time. Learners will develop their ability to respect and advocate for the rights of others.

Sexual health and well-being

Learners will develop developmentally appropriate knowledge and understanding of bodies, puberty, reproduction, sexual health, contraception, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and factors which can influence sexual health and well-being.

Learning will include menstrual health and well-being, fertility and sexual function across the life course, the continuing effects of hormones, and how to find support. It will cover contraception and reproductive choices, including awareness of abortion; the causes, symptoms and impact of sexual and reproductive health conditions, including HIV and reproductive cancers; and skills to minimise risks and seek help.

Learners will critically consider representations of diverse bodies in media, including unrealistic or harmful representations. They will develop understanding of entitlement to safe and pleasurable relationships, the role of consensual sexual activity in healthy relationships, the legal age of consent, and how to access and use appropriate support services.

Empowerment, safety and respect

Learners will develop their understanding of rights, consent, boundaries, equality, respect and safety. This includes recognising harmful, abusive and coercive behaviours, including control, sexual violence and violence based on sex, gender and sexuality, and knowing how to respond and access help for themselves and others.

Learning will address how consent is communicated in different relationships and contexts, including online, and how substances, violence, coercion and relationship norms can impair consensual behaviour. It will include the ethical and legal issues around consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated imagery, online sexual material and intimacy, and harmful or unrealistic representations in sexual media.

Learners will develop understanding of laws that protect against discrimination, violence, abuse, neglect and harassment, including that these laws are intended to protect rather than criminalise young people. They will learn how to advocate for safe environments and safely speak out against sex- and gender-based and sexual violence.

Across these strands, learners will encounter developmentally appropriate learning relating to areas including relationships, rights and equity, sex, gender and sexuality, bodies and body image, sexual health and well-being, violence, safety and support.

These summaries do not replace the full mandatory content of the RSE Code. An accompanying curriculum map will identify each mandatory learning requirement, where and how it is addressed across Years 7–11 and curriculum areas, the staff responsible, progression and revisiting, appropriate resources, adaptations and evidence of learning. The map will inform planning and the monitoring arrangements in section 16.

5. Progression

RSE at Cyfarthfa High School is a progressive curriculum rather than a series of isolated lessons.

Learning in Years 7 to 11 will build upon learners' previous knowledge and experiences. Concepts will be revisited with increasing depth and complexity as learners develop.

The Code sets out three broad developmental phases, with indicative starting points from ages 3, 7 and 11. These are guides for professional judgement, not fixed age or year-group boundaries. Introduction to learning within a phase may be gradual, based on each learner's age, knowledge, maturity, additional learning needs and anticipated physiological and emotional development. Secondary provision will build on and consolidate learning from earlier phases, with access to Phase 3 learning as it becomes developmentally appropriate.

For example, learners may initially explore personal boundaries, respect and permission before progressing to more complex learning about sexual consent, relationship pressures, coercion and the legal framework surrounding consent.

Curriculum planning will ensure appropriate progression across Years 7–11 and will identify where each aspect of the statutory RSE Code is taught.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is a whole-school responsibility and may be delivered through a combination of:

- dedicated PSE/RSE lessons;
- the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience;
- Science;
- Humanities and RVE where appropriate;
- tutorial provision;
- assemblies;
- digital and online-safety education;
- safeguarding education;

- curriculum enrichment activities;
- appropriately commissioned external organisations or specialist professionals.

Where RSE content is taught through different curriculum areas, the school will maintain an overview of provision to ensure appropriate coverage, progression and consistency.

RSE will not rely solely upon one-off events, assemblies or visiting speakers.

7. Developmental Appropriateness

Developmental appropriateness is central to the school's approach to RSE.

Staff will consider learners':

- age and stage of development;
- existing knowledge and understanding;
- emotional maturity;
- additional learning needs;
- communication needs;
- social and emotional development.

Learners of the same chronological age may have different developmental needs. Teaching approaches and resources may therefore be adapted where appropriate while ensuring that learners have access to their statutory entitlement.

The school will work closely with the ALNCo and other appropriate professionals where individual learners require additional support or adaptations.

8. Inclusion, Equality and Diversity

RSE will be inclusive and accessible to all learners.

Teaching will recognise that learners come from a range of families, cultures, religions, backgrounds and communities and may hold different beliefs and values.

RSE will include learning that develops understanding of different identities, views and values and a diversity of relationships, gender and sexuality, including LGBTQ+ lives. This inclusion will be reflected across the relevant learning strands, resources and teaching, including sexual health and well-being. Teaching will promote dignity and respect for all and challenge LGBTQ+ based bullying and discrimination.

Teaching will not seek to promote a particular lifestyle or personal viewpoint. In accordance with the RSE Code and supporting Curriculum for Wales statutory guidance, teaching will be objective, critical and pluralistic, providing learners with factual information and opportunities to understand different perspectives where appropriate.

Discrimination, prejudice, harassment and derogatory language will be challenged consistently.

9. Sensitive and Controversial Issues

RSE will sometimes involve sensitive or challenging topics.

Staff will establish appropriate classroom expectations which allow learners to participate safely and respectfully. Learners will not be expected to disclose personal experiences or information about themselves or their families during RSE activities.

Where appropriate, anonymous question techniques may be used to allow learners to ask questions safely.

Staff will answer questions honestly, factually and in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Where a question is not appropriate to address within a whole-class setting, staff may explain this to the learner and identify a more appropriate way for them to access information or support.

10. Safeguarding and Disclosures

RSE plays an important role in safeguarding children and young people by helping learners recognise inappropriate behaviour, abuse, exploitation, coercion and unsafe situations and understand how to seek help.

Staff must never promise confidentiality to a learner.

If a learner makes a disclosure or provides information which raises a safeguarding concern during an RSE lesson or activity, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures immediately.

Concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with school procedures.

Learners will be reminded, particularly before sensitive topics are discussed, that staff have a responsibility to share information where they are concerned about a learner's safety or well-being.

11. Confidentiality and Advice

Staff may provide learners with factual information, education and signposting to appropriate services.

Where learners seek individual advice relating to sexual health, relationships or safeguarding matters, staff will respond within the boundaries of their professional role and the school's safeguarding procedures.

Where appropriate, learners may be signposted to health professionals or other recognised support services.

12. External Visitors and Agencies

The school may use appropriately qualified external organisations or professionals to enhance RSE provision.

External visitors will complement, rather than replace, the school's planned curriculum.

Before an external organisation delivers RSE, the school will consider:

- the suitability and expertise of the provider;
- the content and resources to be used;
- developmental appropriateness;
- safeguarding arrangements;
- equality and inclusion;
- how the session contributes to the school's planned RSE curriculum.

A member of school staff will normally remain responsible for the learning environment when an external provider is working with learners.

13. Parents and Carers

Cyfarthfa High School recognises parents and carers as important partners in supporting children's understanding of relationships, health, well-being and growing up.

The school aims to communicate openly with parents and carers about its RSE provision and will make information about the curriculum available.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school if they have questions or concerns about RSE provision.

Under Curriculum for Wales, RSE is a mandatory element of the curriculum. There is no parental right to withdraw a learner from statutory RSE provision.

14. Learner Voice

Learner voice will contribute to the development and evaluation of RSE provision.

The school may use questionnaires, focus groups, School Council activities and lesson feedback to understand learners' experiences and identify emerging issues.

Learner voice will inform curriculum development while recognising that the statutory requirements of the RSE Code must continue to be met.

15. Staff Training and Support

Staff delivering RSE will be appropriately supported to deliver sensitive content confidently and consistently.

The school will provide professional learning where appropriate, particularly in areas such as:

- safeguarding and disclosures;
- consent and healthy relationships;
- sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour;
- online sexual content and image sharing;
- equality and diversity;
- sexual health;
- responding to sensitive questions;
- developmentally appropriate teaching.

Staff should seek advice from the RSE Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead where they are uncertain about the suitability of content or how to respond to a particular issue.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The school will regularly monitor the quality and effectiveness of RSE. The Head of PSE, working with the Policy Lead and relevant curriculum leaders, will maintain and review a curriculum map against every mandatory learning requirement in the RSE Code. This review will take place at least annually and when provision changes, identify gaps or unnecessary repetition, and record the actions, responsible staff and timescales needed to address them.

Monitoring will include the curriculum mapping review described above. Other evidence may include:

- review of schemes of learning and teaching resources;
- learner voice;

- staff feedback;
- scrutiny of learning;
- lesson visits where appropriate;
- consideration of safeguarding and behaviour trends;
- feedback from parents and carers;
- review of emerging local and national issues.

The RSE curriculum will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant, developmentally appropriate and compliant with statutory requirements.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities in relation to RSE.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that the school's curriculum meets statutory requirements.

The Policy Lead, Lee-Anne McCarthy, Lead Practitioner Safeguarding and Wellbeing, will oversee implementation and review of this policy, working with the Head of PSE and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Head of PSE will oversee curriculum planning, progression, resources, staff support and monitoring of RSE provision, including maintaining the curriculum map and coordinating action to address identified gaps.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide advice regarding safeguarding aspects of RSE and ensure appropriate responses to disclosures or concerns arising through RSE provision.

Teaching staff are responsible for delivering agreed curriculum content in a safe, inclusive and developmentally appropriate manner and for following safeguarding procedures.

18. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, with the next scheduled review in September 2027, and earlier in response to:

- changes to legislation or statutory guidance;
- revisions to the school's RSE curriculum;
- safeguarding developments;
- feedback from learners, parents/carers and staff;
- identified local or national priorities.

The Governing Body will approve significant amendments to this policy.