RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY POLICY

Written in line with Welsh Government Statutory Guidance, the RSE code and legislative summary (January 2022)

Policy:	Relationships and Sexuality
Age Range:	3-16
Type:	Non-Statutory
Sub Committee:	Learning and Provision
Governing Body Approval:	1st March 2023
Review Date:	February 2025
Staff Lead:	S Hegarty

Version Control

Version	Key Changes	Sub Committee Approval (Date)	Full GB Approval (Date)	Review Date
1.0		March 2022	1st March 2023	February 2025

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide all stakeholders (learners, staff, parents/carers, governors, and external organisations) at Abertillery Learning Community information about our Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) provision.

High quality RSE is fundamental in creating a safe school environment where learners grow and develop positive, healthy relationships for life. Fostering positive attitudes towards gender diversity, equality and respectful relationships. This policy supports our approach to preventing violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence (VAWDASV). At Abertillery Learning Community we believe all learners have the right to receive high-quality, holistic, and *inclusive* education about relationships and sexuality.

At Abertillery Learning Community we recognise that the world around us is evolving rapidly and significantly. We are inclusive of diversity. We fully comply with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the RSE Code.

Abertillery Learning Community actively participates in the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme (WNHSS) which provides a framework for the development of a whole school approach to RSE through effectively linking policy, staff, development of a spiral curriculum, school ethos, learner voice and the wider community.

Working with Parents and Carers

We support parents and carers in understanding why high quality, inclusive RSE at Abertillery Learning Community is important to the development and learning of every young person. Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss concerns they may have with their class or form teacher in the first instance or the RSE Lead for the campus.

Legislation

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the new Curriculum for Wales framework and is mandatory for all learners.

The Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE): statutory guidance (2022) sets out statutory guidance in relation to RSE and is published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 (the Act); it is designed to assist those responsible under the Act to design RSE as part of the curriculum. The Curriculum for Wales – Relationships and Sexuality Education code contains mandatory requirements for RSE. It sets out the themes and matters that must be encompassed for learner from 3 to 16 years old.

Our school policy and curriculum have been developed in line with Welsh Government statutory guidance and legislative summary and aligns with the Equality Act 2010.

UNCRC

At Abertillery Learning Community we discuss RSE in the context of children's rights as protected by the United Nations Convention on [The Rights of the Child.](#)

The rights below underpin and shape our RSE curriculum and school policy:

- non-discrimination (Article 2)
- be heard and involved in decision-making (Article 12)
- freedom of expression (Article 13)
- follow your own religion (Article 14)
- have privacy (Article 16)
- access information to make informed decisions (Article 17)
- not be harmed and should be looked after and kept safe (Article 19)
- experience the highest attainable health, access to health facilities, and preventative health care (Article 24)
- education that prepares children to understand others (Article 29)
- protection from sexual abuse and exploitation (Article 34)
- get special help if they have been abused (Article 39)

Everyone who works with children at Abertillery Learning Community should always do what is best for each learner, as part of our Whole School Approach to RSE (Article 3).

Period Dignity

Our school fully supports the Welsh Government Period Dignity Strategy Action Plan, which aims to end the stigma and shame associated with periods.

We will support the plan by ensuring the following:

1. Provision of free resources, including environmentally friendly resources, that learners can independently access.
2. A robust RSE curriculum that covers the menstrual cycle and periods for all genders.
3. A safe and suitable environment for applying/changing products.
4. Provision of sanitary bins, in learner toilets to support the safe and environmental disposal of products.
5. Clear communication to learners/parents/carers informing them of the available free resources on site, and how they can access them.

Aims of RSE

Abertillery Learning Community is fully inclusive which means that we use a whole school, strategic approach to fully include and respond to the needs of all our learners and families.

RSE has a positive and empowering role in learners' education and is vital in supporting them to realise the Four purposes as part of a *whole-school approach.*

Our RSE curriculum enables learners to form and maintain a range of relationships, all based on mutual trust and respect, this is the foundation of RSE at our school.

Good quality RSE empowers learners to make responsible, well-informed decisions and to be able to understand themselves and others.

Equipping learners to challenge harmful stereotypes and perceptions and be able to seek help and support.

Management of the RSE Programme

The Headteacher is the strategic lead for RSE and Phase leads/Assistant Headteacher is responsible for identifying any training needs of staff, resources, listening to learner activities and keeping up to date with developments by attending appropriate training. Phase leads/Assistant Headteacher will audit RSE in line with the review of this policy and/or considering any new developments, using the audit tool in **appendix 1**.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the RSE policy is up to date, monitored, consulted upon, effectively implemented and is widely disseminated throughout the whole school community.

RSE Curriculum

RSE is taught by class teachers through discreet lessons and cross-cutting themes. Teaching strategies and techniques will vary according to the needs of learners.
The school seeks to give quality education on RSE to all learners.

The school seeks to provide accurate, unbiased information on RSE to learners as part of our pluralistic approach. This means that where questions of values are concerned, we provide a range of views on a given subject commonly held within society. As they develop, learners are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

As the school introduces the new Curriculum for Wales, at Upper school RSE will also be taught through Personal and Social Education (PSE), and for some year groups the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning Experience (AoLE).

Across our Lower school RSE will be taught through the Health and Well-being AoLE and cross-cutting themes and will incorporate all five statements of what matters.

RSE in the curriculum focuses on three broad strands:

- **Relationships and identity**: helping learners develop the skills they need to develop healthy, safe, and fulfilling relationships with others and helping them to make sense of their thoughts and feelings.
- **Sexual health and well-being**: helping learners to draw on factual sources regarding their sexual and reproductive health and well-being, allowing them to make informed decisions throughout their lives.
- **Empowerment, safety and respect**: helping to protect learners from all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect and enabling them to recognise unsafe or harmful relationships and situations, supporting them to recognise when, how and where to seek support and advice.

Abertillery Learning Community uses the following resources:

JIGSAW
SENSE resources
Exposed (online video)
Trapped (online video)
Hafan Cymru (Spectrum)
School BEAT resources via the School Police Liaison officer
Growing Up resource
NSPCC

(A suggested resources list can be found in **Appendix 3**).

Involving Outside Agencies:

When outside agencies provide sessional learning opportunities for learners, the school will ensure that:

- The school and the external provider have agreed the aims, content and approach to be adopted.
- The school has checked that the work of the agency is known to them and is considered appropriate in respect of safeguarding/child protection procedures and equality.
- The school has made the provider aware of any relevant school policies.
- The school has planned for the provider to be actively and always supported by a teacher throughout the visit.

Understanding the nature of progression in RSE

At Abertillery Learning Community we follow the Phase 1, 2 and 3 approach, as outlined by the Welsh Government's Code in terms of what content is covered by each age range. The principles of progression across the Health and well-being Area offer guidance to progression in RSE. Our curriculum revisits content, themes and topics as outlined in the preceding phases set out in the Code, reinforcing and building on learners' developing understanding and changing needs.

RSE for learners with additional needs.

We consider how best to meet the needs of learners whose additional needs means that their understanding of sexual health and well-being may not match their chronological age.

All our staff, including ancillary staff, physiotherapists, nurses and carers are aware of the school's approach to RSE when working with learners with additional learning needs.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Our RSE curriculum supports learners to be able to build their knowledge and understanding of how to recognise harmful sexual behaviours, discrimination, abusive relationships, and violence and develop an understanding of consent. Learners may disclose information to school staff that cannot remain confidential. When this occurs, our staff will follow the guidelines below:

- Remind learners that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- Inform learners first if staff are going to break confidentiality.
- Where appropriate, encourage learners to talk about any worries and concerns they have with parents/carers.
- Ensure learners are supported adequately by an appropriate member of staff.
- Where appropriate, issue/signpost information on contraception. including precise information regarding where young people can access Health Care Services **(learners over the age of 13 only).**
- Always follow our Safeguarding Policy if there are child protection concerns.

If a learner under the age of 13 discloses that they are sexually active or contemplating sexual activity, then this is a child protection issue and the school's Safeguarding Procedures will be followed.

Signposting to services

(See appendix 3 for support and professional services)

Learners can access a range of information and advice through:
- The school's wellbeing team.
- The C Card Scheme (ABUHB Aneurin Bevan University Health Board).
- ABUHB School Nursing.

Positive, protective, and preventative RSE

Building on the Code, the approach to RSE in our school is positive, protective and preventative.

We support learners to:

- have access to objective, supportive and inclusive information about growing up, changing, relationships, reproductive and sexual health.
- understand and cope with change, conflicts and pressure.
- recognise potentially harmful behaviours in relationships and know how to seek support.
- have the knowledge to recognise all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect, including *violence against women,* domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- seek help and advice where appropriate.

At Abertillery Learning Community we endeavour to create safe and supportive learning environments. This helps to create trust and allow learners a safe space to consider learning, ask questions and express their thoughts and feelings.

We aim to encourage respectful conversation. This can be achieved by developing a working agreement of ground rules with learners This helps to maintain professional boundaries and keep learners and practitioners safe. For example, creative approaches can help learners share their questions, views and experiences anonymously, allowing more open, honest discussion.

Distancing techniques will also be used to help learners to discuss sensitive issues and develop their decision-making skills in a 'safe' environment. The school includes a question box within all RSE lessons for pupils to anonymously ask a question. Any information that the teacher feels would support the class will be followed up in a later activity. Sometimes an individual learner may ask an explicit or inappropriate question. If this situation arises, the learner will be reminded of the class agreement. (See example in appendix 2).

As part of the RSE programme in Abertllery Learning Community all teachers will use the correct biological terminology.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

We recognise that peer-on-peer sexual harassment is highly prevalent in the lives of young learners and at Abertllery Learning Community school, we have adopted a whole-school preventative and proactive approach to dealing with it.

This includes providing learners with assurance that school staff will take every incidence of peer-on-peer sexual harassment seriously and work in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies.

We will provide sufficient, cumulative, and beneficial learning opportunities for learners across the whole age range about harmful sexual behaviours. This includes providing a safe, enabling, and supportive environment for open and honest discussions.

We will ensure all school staff receive regular and purposeful professional learning opportunities on, for example, relationships, sexuality, diversity, gender transitioning and harmful sexual behaviours.

Equality Statement

Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against learners on the basis of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the *protected characteristics*). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage.

Our school recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within our community and between learners, parents, staff, governors/management committee members and partners.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE curriculum will be monitored and evaluated by Phase leads/Assistant Headteacher annually using the audit tool in **appendix 1** to ensure that it remains relevant and up to date.

Date Policy Approved by Chair of Governors/Management Committee:

Date of Policy Review:

Date of Audit:

Review Date of Audit:

Appendix 1: A Whole School Approach to RSE: Audit Tool

This checklist is primarily for the use of the designated member of the senior leadership team with overall responsibility for managing holistic RSE provision.

Success Criteria	Fully in place	Partly in place	Not in place
Leadership and Commitment			
A member of the senior leadership team has overall responsibility for RSE.			
There is a member of staff who coordinates the delivery of RSE.			
There is a named governor for RSE.			
There is an action plan to ensure continuous review and development of the RSE curriculum			
The school has an up to date RSE policy which has been developed by staff in consultation with learners, parents governors and has been agreed by the governing body			
Understanding the Needs of Learners and the School Community			
Learners are actively involved in the development of the RSE curriculum			
The diverse experience of learners, such as vulnerable groups and those with additional learning needs are acknowledged and their RSE needs met.			
The school is aware of the emerging priorities and health needs within the local school community that are pertinent to RSE			
Engagement			
The RSE policy has been disseminated to all members of the school community, including parents/carers and visitors involved in the delivery of RSE.			
Staff are actively engaged and involved in developing the RSE policy and curriculum provision			
Parents / carers receive information on their child's learning in RSE			

Arrangements are in place for parents/carers to view RSE teaching materials.			
Information is provided to support parents / carers in their role as educators of RSE in the home.			
Arrangements for managing parental requests to withdraw their child from sex education are followed.			
Workforce			
All staff involved in the delivery of the RSE programme receive appropriate training and support.			
RSE is taught by trained, knowledgeable and confident staff.			
Relationships			
The school can demonstrate how it fosters and develops healthy relationships between all members of the school community			
The school actively promotes the UNCRC			
Support Services			
Contributions to RSE by external agencies support and enhance the RSE programme and do not replace teaching by school staff. Visitors comply with school policy.			
Secondary aged learners have access to appropriate local information, support and advice.			
The school actively engages with specialist services e.g. school nurse			
Learning Environment			
Learners feel safe in RSE lessons.			
Learners can access support and advice in designated areas in the school.			
Curriculum			
Learners are actively involved in the development of the RSE curriculum.			
RSE curriculum overviews have been developed clearly identifying progression steps.			
Resources are carefully selected for their suitability and are reviewed for their effectiveness.			

A range of teaching and learning strategies are used which encourage participation with opportunities for leaners to develop positive values, skills and attitudes around RSE.			
Assessing learners achievement in RSE is planned into the programme.			

Next steps

Completed by: Date:

Appendix 2: Model class agreement for RSE

Developing a class agreement as part of RSE or individually with each class, establishes clear parameters regarding what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole group setting. In turn, this helps to create a balance between learners feeling respected and safe, and protecting individual privacy.

Class agreement

1. We understand that we are all different and have our own opinions / experiences, but everyone will be treated with respect.

2. We will not ask personal questions.

3. We will talk to a trusted adult after the lesson if you need to.

4. We will all do our best to challenge prejudice in all its forms.

5. We will use the proper words for body parts and sexual activity.

6. If the teachers / staff believes you are at risk of harm, they have a responsibility to share the information with the Safeguarding Lead. (Personalise with a name of Safeguarding Lead if required)

   Please personalise to reflect your class / group.

Appendix 3: Resources and Services to Support RSE

The views and opinions included within these external internet addresses do not necessarily mirror the views or opinions of Blaneau Gwent LA. It is not the responsibility of Blaneau Gwent LA to advise, monitor or be liable for the content of these external internet addresses. Use of any information obtained from such address is voluntary, and reliance on it should only be undertaken after an independent review of its accuracy, completeness and suitability for the intended audience.

Resources & Services	Details
ABUHB Sexual and Reproductive Health **01495 765065** B / I	For contraception and sexual health issues.
The new Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Code – what it is and what it's not! | Curriculum for Wales Blog (gov.wales) B / I	A guide for practitioners. This document helps to outline the purpose of the new RSE code.
Agenda B / In / R / S / T	A young people's guide to making positive relationships matter.
Blackwood Basement 01495 235511 / @youth4u1 I / In / R / S / T / W	Information drop-in centre open to all 11-25 years olds providing support and advocacy.
Bloody Brilliant B / I / In / R / S	Supportive information around menstruation and advice for learners and parents.
Brook Learn I / R / S / T/ W	A range of high-quality, self-directed and mostly free-to-access courses to empower, support and encourage you to deliver effective relationships and sexuality education (RSE).
EAS RSE Toolkit R / S / T	A regional toolkit, created by practitioners, to support schools in planning an effective whole school approach to Relationships and Sexuality Education.
Growing Up Resource B / R / S / T / W	Resource to support the delivery of RSE. This can only be accessed through HWB.

Gwent Safeguarding B / I / In / R / S	Safeguarding adults and children in Gwent.
Frisky Wales B / I / R	NHS Wales Sexual Health Website.
Just a joke R / S	Teaching toolkits to support schools understand, prevent and respond to online sexual harassment. The toolkits includes classroom resources and guidance (Age 9-12)
Mermaids UK I / In / S / T	Providing help for gender diverse kids, young people, and their families.
NSPCC Learning I / R / S / T	Training and resources to help you protect children from neglect and abuse.
'Step up Speak up' B / I / R / S	Teaching toolkits to support schools understand, prevent and respond to online sexual harassment. The toolkits includes classroom resources and guidance: (13-17 year olds)
SchoolBeat R / S / T /W	Providing information and resources for pupils, teachers, parents and partners to reinforce the key messages delivered by our School Community Police Officers in primary and secondary schools as well as alternative educational settings.
Sense Interactive Resource R	Resource to support the delivery of RSE.
Sexual Health Outreach **SRHOutreach.abb@wales.nhs.uk** B / I / In	Provide specific support to individuals identified as 'Vulnerable' to safeguard these individuals and to promote positive sexual health and advice. Also, providing sexual health education and training within the community.
Spectrum Project **Spectrum@hafancymru.co.uk** **01267 225563** B / I / In / R / S / T / W	Educating schools, pupils and parents in Wales about healthy relationships by taking a whole school approach to tackling domestic abuse.

Stonewall Cymru **Education@stonewallcymru.org.uk** **02920 237744** B / I / In / R / S / T	Supporting schools to become more LGBTQ+ inclusive.
Thinkuknow Toolkit B / I / R	Information and guidance which is appropriate and relevant to the experiences of young people aged 11-18. The toolkit includes activities that can be delivered as one-off lessons or used as part of young people's relationships and sex education.
Umbrella Cymru **info@umbrellacymru.co.uk** **0300 302 3670** I / In / S / T / W	Gender and Sexual Diversity Support Specialists.
Harmful Sexual Behaviours Training B / I / S / T	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviours – Education practitioners training session. The resource contains a session pack and video for education practitioners to enable reflection on responses and procedures around harmful sexual behaviours displayed and experienced by children and young people in an education setting.

Key:

B – Bilingual

I – Information website

In – Offer 1-1 / Group intervention work

R – Class resources to support the RSE curriculum

S – Support and professional advice

T – Provide staff training

W – Deliver pupil workshops