



Relationship and Sexuality (RSE) Policy

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as detailed in the school's policy review cycle. It may also be necessary to review and amend it sooner to reflect both local and national changes.

Ratified by Governing Body	Signature	Date
Headteacher: Angharad Bryn-Jones	CAB	8.2.23
Chair of Governors: Clancy Brett	Chapat.	8.2.23
Next review date: February 2024		

Introduction:

Our Mission Statement is clear:

Successful Healthy Individuals Nurturing Excellence (SHINE)

Our Vision is simple:

At Ysgol Penmaes we continually strive to do more than just educate, it is our aim to offer every pupil the opportunity to achieve their full potential in a safe, secure and enriching environment. It is our intention to offer a curriculum that promotes ambitious, capable and informed pupils at a developmentally appropriate level. Penmaes places a strong focus on the well-being of all, facilitated through highly effective communication processes. Learning is delivered in a way that facilitates an immersive multi-sensory curriculum that is fun and provides real life authentic experiences which help to build resilience; positively impacting development, whilst ensuring the promotion of collaboration and independence. We, as a special school, ensure a common language for learning. We celebrate and embrace Cynefin/place, and planning, teaching and learning ensures a broad, balanced and creative curriculum promoting the four core purposes of the Curriculum for Wales whilst encouraging pupils to be the best they can be.

Our School Values are fundamental:

- Friendship and kindness
- Resilience and perseverance
- Empathy and trust
- Communication and respect
- Responsibility and teamwork
- Positivity and creativity
- Tolerance and trust

All of our values promote healthy, positive relationships. By modeling the values, we aim to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence in learning, whilst creating a positive school community environment for all.

Policy statement:

In September 2022, Relationship & Sexuality Education (RSE) became a statutory part of the new curriculum in Wales.

The Welsh Government - Relationships and Sexuality Education Code (2021) highlights the principles for embedding RSE in the curriculum and outlines interwoven themes:

- Relationships
- Rights and equity
- Sex, gender and sexuality
- Bodies and body image
- Sexual health and well-being
- Violence, safety and support.

Rationale:

This RSE policy was formulated inline with the 'Curriculum for Wales – Relationships and Sexuality Education Code (2021)', the 'Foundation Phase Framework Document (2015)', the 'Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021', the 'Informing the Future of the Sex and Relationships Education Curriculum in Wales' (Cardiff University) Document December 2017' and the 'Education Act 1996'.

Process:

The Assistant Headteacher, Lead for Health and Wellbeing, School Nurse, Healthy Schools Coordinator, School Council, Senior Leadership Team, Teachers and Governors were consulted on the formulation of this policy.

The whole school approach means effectively linking all aspects of school, including the curriculum, policy, staff, school environment and community to support learners in their relationships and sexuality education. This allows learners and practitioners to thrive, reinforce a consistent and positive ethos, as well as holistic high-quality support for all..

Using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1992) and the new Framework for RSE in Wales (2021) as our guide, we have created a live RSE curriculum document that supports the development of our young people in order for them to be the best possible they can. At Penmaes School, we are committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of every child and young person. We actively promote and encourage healthy lifestyles through implementing a whole school approach to RSE.

Good quality, developmentally appropriate RSE at Penmaes includes the four core purposes, which underpin the Curriculum for Wales (2020). As such, pupils are taught to be ethically informed, ambitious, capable, healthy, confident, enterprising and creative learners.

Links with other policies:

- Safeguarding/ Child protection
- Anti-bullying (Including procedures for dealing with homophobic bullying)
- Substance Misuse
- Curriculum
- Strategic equality
- Health & Safety
- Pupil Behaviour & Discipline
- Social Media & E-Safety

RSE links to the Curriculum for Wales:

RSE at Penmaes is taught through the Foundation Phase Framework, the Curriculum for Wales' six Areas of Learning and Experience and WJEC Entry Level. At Penmaes school, RSE sits within the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience (AOLE) which is led by a school coordinator. The fundamental components include physical health and development, mental health, and emotional and social well-being, and recognises that good health and well-being are important to enable successful learning. Engagement with this AOLE helps to foster a whole-school approach that enables health and well-being to permeate all aspects of school life.

This policy is designed to provide breadth and depth in the curriculum and should be used in conjunction with the Health and Wellbeing AOLE 'Statements of What Matter':

- Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits.
- How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Our decision making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others.
- How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and wellbeing.
- Healthy relationships are fundamental to our wellbeing.

The Governors and staff of Penmaes School believe that RSE is essential if children and young people are to make sensible and well informed decisions about their lives. To support learning, the RSE curriculum has been designed to support the Welsh Government's four core purposes:

• Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives.

- Enterprising, creative contributors who are ready to play a full part in life and work.
- Ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.
- Healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Aims:

Whole-school approach

The teaching and learning of RSE at Penmaes is supported by a whole-school approach and this is critical in supporting learners' well-being. The RSE Curriculum has been designed to be inclusive and reflects diversity, raises awareness and understanding of different identities, views and values, and teaches learners about different forms of relationships, genders and sexualities, including LGBTQ+ lives. Learning about rights and equity runs through all the strands, as well as embedding learning and experience through a rights-based approach.

Enabling human rights

As a 'Rights Respecting School', Penmaes discusses RSE in the context of children's rights as protected by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC); a rights-based approach that supports equity. Rights provide learners with a way of exploring RSE issues, helping them to develop the foundational skills for healthy relationships, respect and understanding of others and to recognise healthy and harmful behaviours.

RSE at Penmaes highlights the right to:

- 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 understanding 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 should always do what is best for each child, is relevant to RSE, as it is to the whole curriculum (Article 3)

Inclusivity, including LGBTQ+ inclusivity

RSE at Penmaes is realised in a way that is inclusive in accordance with the principles of equality and within the statutory guidelines set out in the RSE Code. This helps ensure that all learners can see themselves, their families, their communities and each other, reflected across the curriculum. This includes issues surrounding gender equity and LGBTQ+ inclusivity. The teaching of RSE at Penmaes School helps learners to understand the importance of a cohesive, fair and equitable society.

Celebrating differences

Our learners are growing up in a world where gender and sexual identity, cultures, rights and legislation are changing or evolving. In order to be effective, inclusive RSE must start early. From a young age, pupils at Penmaes School learn about their own uniqueness, how to appreciate diversity, and the importance of respecting the rights of others. This is the foundation for exploring diversity in relationships, gender and sexual identity, and for developing the skills and values needed to think critically about gender and sexual norms, rights and inequities. This helps our learners to develop understanding of different values, religious beliefs and non-religious convictions that can inform our values, and identity around relationships and sexuality.

Positive, Protective and Preventive RSE:

The approach to RSE at Penmaes is positive, protective and preventive and considers how learners might need to be supported to:

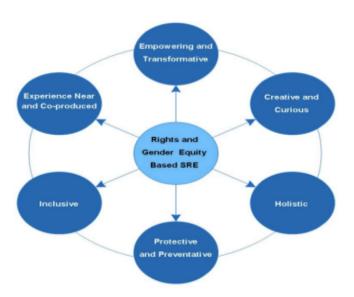
- Understand and cope with change, conflicts and pressure.
- Recognise potentially harmful behaviours in relationships and know how to seek support.
- Have the knowledge to recognise all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect, including violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- Seek help and advice where appropriate.

Penmaes School has created supportive learning environments, which encourage trust and allows learners

a safe space to take part in learning, ask questions and express their thoughts and feelings. Practitioners seek to present learning around RSE issues positively and meaningfully, and understand that negative aspects of RSE are likely to be ineffective or harmful. Positive environments are achieved by developing a working agreement of ground rules with learners for discussions about RSE. This helps to maintain professional boundaries and keep learners and practitioners safe.

Principles and Approaches for Curriculum Design:

There are 7 core principles and key areas for 'high quality' comprehensive and inclusive Relationship and Sexuality Education.



A rights and equity based curriculum is the foundation of a creative and curious, empowering and transformative, experience-near and co-produced, holistic, inclusive, and protective and preventive RSE.

Inclusive RSE recognises and values diversity and difference across the domains of sex, gender, sexuality and relationships.

Holistic RSE explores the interconnected ways in which sex, gender, sexuality and relationships shape people's lives across the world.

Experience-near and co-produced RSE is developed with children and young people to ensure a relevant and responsive curriculum that enhances pupil voice and agency.

Creative and Curious RSE supports a questioning curriculum and draws upon creative pedagogies to facilitate an ethical, safe and agentic learning environment.

Empowering and transformative RSE creates an affirmative and transformative curriculum that invites children and young people to advance social justice for gender, sexual and relationship equity and well-being.

Protective and Preventive RSE supports children and young people to develop: social, emotional and physical literacy; resilience to cope with change, conflicts and pressure; the knowledge to recognise abusive relationships; and the confidence to seek support.

At Penmaes School, we have developed RSE through incorporating the 7 core principles within the context of broad and interlinked learning strands:

- 1. **Relationships and Identity:** helping learners develop the skills they need to develop healthy, safe, and fulfilling relationships with others and making 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.
- 3. **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.

These strands allow us to develop a curriculum tailored to our learners making connections and developing authentic contexts for learning across the curriculum.

Implementation:

RSE at Penmaes takes account of a range of factors including the learner's age; knowledge and maturity; any additional learning needs and physiological and emotional development.

The RSE Code sets out each strand of teaching and learning in three broad developmental phases as follows:

Phase 1: from age 3
 Phase 2: from age 7

3. **Phase 3**: from age 11

The ages set out indicate broadly when practitioners should start to consider whether learning in a phase is developmentally appropriate for their learners. However, RSE must be developmentally appropriate for each learner. This may mean some learners will be ready for specific learning before the broad indications given in the Code, but likewise it may mean that some learners need opportunity for further development before they engage with specific learning. The age limits and 'learning supports' for the three phases may not be linear at Penmaes, due to the varying needs of our learners.

Coverage:

The Relationships and Sexuality Education Code (2021) states that all learners should engage with the learning of three core strands at a developmentally appropriate stage. Due to the complex nature of the learners at Penmaes school, it is vital to consider how best to meet the needs of all learners whose understanding of sexual health and well-being issues may not match their development. Careful consideration needs to be given of the prerequisites for meaningful learning in RSE and the strategies for learning may differ to meet the needs of learners. For example, learners who use alternative methods of communication, such as signing, symbols or communication switches and aids, will need alternative methods to support the teaching of RSE terms, such as Makaton and BSL signing.

Strand 1: Relationships and Identity

This strand focuses on:

- The range of relationships that human beings have throughout their lives
- How identity can be shaped by our relationships and sexuality
- The importance of human rights in securing healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships in an inclusive society.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Practitioners should consider learners' developmental appropriateness for learning in each phase.		
From age 3	From age 7	From age 11

The learning supports:		
Ability to act with kindness, empathy and compassion in interactions with others immediate to them including family, friendship and peer relationships.	Ability to form and maintain relationships which are equitable, respectful and kind with a range of others.	Understanding the positive and negative characteristics and healthy or unhealthy aspects of a range of relationships including family, friendship, romantic and sexual. Ability to develop and understand the importance of equity, mutual respect, 6 and affection in relationships with others.
An awareness of how to communicate wants and needs in relationships, and begin to respect those of others. Awareness of how needs relate to rights.	How understanding and use of effective communication, decision-making, managing conflict and refusal skills are part of ensuring your own and others rights and part of friendships and relationships	Understanding and use of effective communication, decision making, managing and resolving conflict, and refusal skills in a range of different contexts and types of relationships, offline and online, including intimate relationships. Understanding how to speak out about harmful behaviours directed at them or others.
Awareness of the diversity of families and relationships, including friendship and peer relationships, and why these are important.	Recognition of the characteristics of different families, friendship and peer relationships and the diversity of these. Understanding positive behaviours in relationships and what can happen when relationships breakdown. An awareness of how families, relationships and parenting are shaped by social and cultural norms and laws that have changed over time.	Understanding how the diversity of relationships including marriage, and all types of civil partnership, has changed over time, and how relationships are positively and negatively impacted by social and cultural norms and laws in different ways around the world.
Developing a sense of themselves, in the context of families, friends and communities.	Recognising how people value different things and have different families, friends and communities. Recognising how people's relationships with others shape who they are and their happiness. An awareness of how identity can be expressed in different ways.	Understanding how rights need to be balanced in a diverse society; the characteristics, benefits and challenges of living in a diverse society; and how and why attitudes have changed and are changing including towards gender and sexuality diversity.
Experiencing inclusive behaviours, language and role modelling that show respect for others, whatever their gender. Recognising learners' rights to be treated fairly, kindly and with respect.	Valuing and recognising the contributions of everyone; and the importance of sex and gender equality. Recognise and know how to safely respond to and challenge gender and sexual stereotypes and unfair	An ability to advocate for and advance the rights of all and understand and respect all people in relation to sex, gender and sexuality. Understanding how the law and human rights secure freedoms around sex,

behaviour. An awareness of positive and negative social cultural norms regarding gender and sexuality influ relationships and behavio	these can differ in other countries and over time. Ability to critically explore and understand
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Strand 2: Sexual Health and Wellbeing:

This strand focuses on:

- Learning about how living things grow, reproduce and have a life cycle
- Developing an understanding of the human body, including people's feelings about their bodies and how these can be represented
- The health issues related to relationships and sexuality
- An understanding of how sexuality and sexual health affects our well-being.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	
Practitioners should consider learners' developmental appropriateness for learning in each phase.			
From age 3	From age 7	From age 11	
The learning supports:	The learning supports:		
The use of accurate terminology for all body parts. An awareness of the human life cycle and that reproduction is a part of life.	Knowledge and understanding of how reproductive organs develop in a human body. This includes understanding fertility and the processes of reproduction, including what supports menstrual health and well-being. Recognising the process of pregnancy and birth.	Understanding how fertility, sexual function and menstrual health and well-being can change across the life course and how to find information and support when needed. The knowledge and understanding of how hormones continue to affect emotional and physical health throughout adulthood. Understanding how contraception can assist with reproductive choices, including awareness of abortion.	
Awareness of how human bodies change as they grow.	The knowledge and understanding of how people	Understanding of good sexual and reproductive health,	

	experience significant physical, emotional, social and cognitive changes during puberty.	including the range of risks and outcomes from sexual experiences and the knowledge needed to support informed decisions about sexual activity and about reproductive choices.
An awareness of the importance of personal self-care and hygiene.	The knowledge and skills needed to manage personal self- care and hygiene, including the importance of menstrual well- being.	The knowledge and understanding of the causes, symptoms and impact of conditions connected to sexual and reproductive health and to fertility, including sexually transmitted infections, HIV and reproductive cancers. Understanding and skills needed to minimise risks and seek help.
A recognition that everyone's body is unique and special to them.	An awareness that there are many different sources of information offline and online that help us learn about our bodies and affect how we feel about our body and other people's bodies.	Critically engaging with positive and negative representations of a diversity of bodies, including through various forms of media and understanding that these can be unrealistic and harmful.
Awareness of the different feelings one can have, recognising other people's feelings and how these may differ to your own.	Awareness of how people can feel attracted to others as they mature and how this can lead to emotional and physical responses.	Understanding how all are entitled to safe and pleasurable relationships and recognising the role consensual sexual activity plays within healthy relationships. Understanding the legal age of consent.
Recognising trusted adults who can help them and whom they can talk to and ask questions of, especially when they feel unhappy or unsafe.	Be able to identify trustworthy sources of information and able to raise issues and questions with trusted adults.	Recognise and be able to use a range of support services to access information and support around relationships, health and well-being and safety.

Strand 3: Empowerment, Safety and Respect

This strand focuses on:

- Learners' rights to safety and protection and freedom from harm and discrimination.
- How and where to seek information, help and support.
- How to support and advocate for the rights, fair treatment and respect of all.

Phase 1 Phase 2 Phase 3

Practitioners should consider learners' developmental appropriateness for learning in each phase.		
From age 3	From age 7	From age 11
The learning supports:		
Recognising harmful behaviour including behaviours which are discriminatory and the right to be free from discrimination. Ability to interact with others in a way that is fair.	Understanding of the importance of fair treatment for all and of respect in all interpersonal interactions offline and online. Recognising the value of non-discriminatory behaviours and when and how to take safe action to respond to and challenge discriminatory behaviours.	Understanding the importance of inclusivity, including for LGBTQ+ people, nondiscrimination and the value of diversity in our interpersonal behaviours and relationships. Developing a sense of individual and social responsibility to others, including consideration of how we respond to behaviours that are 12 discriminatory, disrespectful and harmful, offline and online.
Recognising the right to be free from harmful, abusive and bullying behaviour. An awareness of how to recognise positive and harmful behaviours, including bullying. Ability to share with a trusted adult when faced with harmful behaviours	Understanding of the right for everyone to be free from harm or abuse. An awareness of different kinds of harmful or abusive behaviour including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect, including peer on peer harassment and bullying and the role technology can play. How to seek support for oneself, and offer support to others.	How to be a good friend and advocate for others. Recognising harmful, abusive or coercive behaviour in personal relationships including control, violence and sexual violence and how to respond and seek help for self and others. This includes all forms of violence based on sex, gender and sexuality.
(Phases 1 and 2 include prerequisite knowledge and skills for understanding the learning on consent at phase 3) Beginning to recognise that other people have thoughts, feelings and opinions that are different. An awareness of the need to seek agreement in order to share, for example toys. An awareness of everyone's right to privacy, personal boundaries and which parts of the body are private. Ability to communicate if someone is touching them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.	Understanding of the right to bodily privacy, personal boundaries including online. Understanding how behaviours may be perceived by others offline and online. Recognising which steps to take to keep safe from harm both in offline and online friendships. Understanding the social and emotional norms and pressures that lead to non-consensual behaviours, friendships and relationships, for example, gender norms. Developing the skills to build consensual behaviours and relationships and know how to safely	Understanding of the importance of consent for safe and healthy relationships and in particular sexual relationships. Understanding of how consent can be communicated in different social contexts and relationships, including online. A critical understanding of how consent is impacted by perception and social context and the factors that influence and impair people's ability to engage in consensual behaviour, for example, violence, coercion and relationship norms.

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	respond, challenge and report nonconsensual behaviours and relationships offline and online.	
Awareness of how to keep safe when using digital media, including sharing with a trusted adult when they feel uncomfortable or scared.	Know how and when digital media can be shared safely, with permission and when it can be a source of harm. Awareness of the benefits and dangers of the internet and social media in forming friendships online. Exploring the motives behind fabricated and digitally-altered media. An understanding of the need to keep safe online, an ability to take steps to protect themselves and an ability to share with trusted adults where something is seen that shouldn't have been, or is upsetting or uncomfortable.	Understand the ethical and legal issues relating to the consensual and nonconsensual sharing of self-generated imagery, and rights to safety, support wellbeing and protection. Understanding the impacts associated with sexual material and intimacy online, including the ethical and legal implications. An awareness of how sexual material and media often represents gender, sexual activity, bodily appearance and relationships in unrealistic and harmful ways.
An awareness that everyone has the right to be safe and no one is allowed to harm anyone else. Ability to speak up for each other.	Awareness of laws in place to protect from different forms of discrimination, violence, abuse, neglect and harassment.	laws around RSE issues that are in place to protect us from all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse, neglect and harassment, and that laws are intended to protect not criminalise young people. An understanding of how to advocate for safe 14 environments and the rights and understanding of everyone on a range of RSE issues. Appreciate the importance of safely speaking out against sex and gender based and sexual violence.

Parental Right to withdraw:

Under the new Code, there will be no parental right to withdraw children from RSE. This means that all children in Wales will have access to consistent, rights-based education in the area of relationships and sexuality. This policy will be reviewed annually unless changes in circumstances or legislation require it to be amended earlier.

Management and organisation of RSE:

- Role of the Governing body: help co-create the RSE policy, ensure that the school has an up-to-date written policy and that it is reviewed annually.
- Role of the Senior Leadership team: co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the school's RSE policy. Involve all those relevant, such as all staff and adults involved with the delivery of RSE within the school, the contents of the policy and its implications to them as providers, assess the Continued Professional Development needs of school staff involved with the programme, and seek to respond to these needs, review the policy and make appropriate changes and amendments every year.
- Role of the Lead for Health and Wellbeing, Assistant Headteacher and RSE coordinator: formulate a programme of study and liaise with colleagues to ensure provision across the whole of the school. Have clear parameters on what learners should be taught, monitor and evaluate the provision delivered through school and the suitability of resources. Liaise and make appropriate links between teachers to support transition, whilst ensuring the continuity and development from phase to phase. Ensure appropriate coverage, continuity and progression, monitor and evaluate the scheme of work and the suitability of resources. Liaise with outside agencies and co-ordinate their involvement with the RSE programme. Consult with learners re: provision, support professional development and increased parent involvement, awareness and participation. Parents/carers have an important influence and role to play in terms of delivering messages about sex and relationships. We welcome any comments from parents that are aimed at improving the school's provision in this area.
- Role of the Teaching staff: Keep up to date with current legislation and training to support the delivery of RSE. Decide on developmental stages for all learners and plan, teach and monitor progress. Develop resources to support learning and ensure that learning uses the most appropriate communication technique (e.g. makaton). Raise any concerns to appropriate Designated Safeguarding Person, in line with the Safeguarding policy, and ask for further support from RSE leads.
- Role of the Non-teaching staff: Ensure all pupils have access to developmentally
 appropriate RSE resources and support learning to help with differentiation. Produce
 resources to support learning and ensure that learning uses the most appropriate
 communication technique (e.g. makaton). Raise any concerns to appropriate Designated
 Safeguarding Person, in line with the Safeguarding policy, and ask for further support
 from RSE leads.

Links with other agencies and professionals:

Delivery of RSE is not the sole responsibility of the school. Therefore, the school recognises the value of involving appropriate outside agencies and visiting speakers within the RSE programme. Input from outside agencies will be sought to complement not substitute or replace the schools delivery of RSE. External providers such as the School Nurse and PC Skyrme (School Liaison Officer) are invited to look at the policy and their thoughts and professional expertise sought in the successful development of this policy. At Penmaes school, we work cooperatively with a range of external agencies and health professionals in order to deliver a well structured and effective RSE programme which include; The School Beat Police Liaison Officer, The School Nurse, Integrated Disabilities Team, Youth Intervention Service, CAMHS, Action 4 Children, CLA Team, Advocacy Service etc. These professionals support the curriculum with their perspective and offer specialised knowledge, experience and resources in the specific topics.

Resources:

At Penmaes we are committed to ensuring that we have access to the most up-to-date resources. Some resources we use for RSE need to be adapted to our cohort of learners. Please see below a list of some of the resources:

- SENSE interactive CD: Growing up and Keeping Safe for Key Stage 2
- SENSE interactive CD: Making sense of Sex and Relationships for Key Stages 3 & 4
- Jiwsi
- Tyfu Fyny (Growing Up)
- Agenda online
- Crush
- Pants (NSPCC)
- Brook.org
- Healthy Relationships (WWA)
- APause
- Bloom
- Genderbread Man
- Brooks traffic light tool
- Great Relationships and Sex Education

Any further/new resources will be carefully reviewed by the RSE Lead prior to use with pupils.