

Cantonian High School

Ysgol Uwchradd Cantonian



THE BEST FROM EACH
SUCCESS FOR ALL

Relationship & Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

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Policy Statement

Cantonian High School is committed to adopting a whole-school approach to the high-quality provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) for all learners. We believe all learners have the right to receive high-quality, holistic, and inclusive education about relationships and sexuality.

High-quality RSE allows for all learners to grow and develop in a safe environment, to understand how to become healthy adults who are critical thinkers, whilst developing positive and healthy relationships with others. It is important that learners can explore, develop and nurture positive attitudes towards equality, gender diversity and respectful relationships. This RSE Policy supports wider approaches to preventing violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence (VAWDASV), harmful sexual behaviours, and peer-on-peer harassment and abuse.

RSE encompasses the knowledge, skills, dispositions and values that will empower learners to:

- Support their health and wellbeing.
- Develop healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships of all kinds, including those with family and friends, and in time, romantic and sexual relationships.
- Navigate and make sense of how relationships, sex, gender, and sexuality shape their own and other people's identities and lives.
- Understand and support their rights and those of others to enjoy equitable, safe, healthy and fulfilling relationships throughout their lives and advocate for these.

Aims of RSE

Cantonian High School 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 Curriculum for Wales's 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 be able to understand themselves and others.
- Our RSE curriculum seeks to equip learners to challenge harmful stereotypes and perceptions and be able to seek help and support.
- Good quality RSE is positive, protective and preventative and underpinned by a need-led, rights-based approach which takes a positive view of human sexuality and relationships.

Good-quality RSE should also:

- Provide accurate facts.
- Use correct biological terminology during RSE lessons.
- Promote a safe, positive, open and honest learning culture free from stigma, shame, fear and guilt which is positively inclusive, respectful and safe for all learners.
- Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and values in relation to RSE.
- Empower learners to make responsible, well-informed decisions and to be able to understand themselves and others.
- Challenge harmful stereotypes and perceptions, including gender norms.
- Provide access to objective, supportive and inclusive information about growing up, body changes, healthy relationships, reproductive and sexual health.
- Provide information on where learners can access help and support services in relation to RSE.

Moral and Values Framework relating to RSE

Cantonian High School teaches RSE within the following moral and values framework:

- Self-respect.
- Respect and tolerance towards others who have different backgrounds, cultures, feelings, views and sexuality.
- An awareness of the way others feel.
- Mutual support and co-operation.
- Honesty and openness.
- The acceptance of the responsibility for and the consequences of, personal actions.
- The right of people to hold their own views within the boundaries of respect for the rights of others.
- The right not to be abused by or taken advantage of, by other people.
- The right to accurate information about sex and relationship issues.

Legislation and Guidance

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the new Curriculum for Wales framework and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16. It sets out the themes and matters that must be encompassed.

The RSE Code is issued in legislation under Section 8 of the Curriculum and Assessments (Wales) Act 2021, and clearly states the legal mandatory requirements for RSE which schools and education provisions have to deliver. Key points are:

- RSE is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16 in Wales.
- Parents/Carers will no longer be able to withdraw their child/young person from RSE in line with the roll out of the new curriculum.
- Using supportive guidance, schools will design their own RSE curriculum.
- The RSE curriculum must be developmentally appropriate for learners.

- The RSE curriculum must include learning that develops learners' awareness and understanding of different identities, views and values, and a diversity of relationships, gender and sexuality, including LGBTQ+ lives.

The RSE Statutory Guidance (2022) is published under Section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is designed to assist those responsible, as stated in the RSE Code, to design the RSE curriculum for their school/education provision.

Cantonian High School fully complies with the legal statutory duty stated in the RSE Code from Welsh Government.

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.

Equality Statement

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 school community. This RSE Policy aligns with the Equality Act 2010. 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.

RSE Curriculum

RSE is a broad, interdisciplinary and complex area that includes biological, social, psychological, spiritual, ethical and cultural dimensions. Cantonian High School seeks to provide a high-quality, pluralistic RSE Curriculum which is based around the six key principles for RSE as set out in the Welsh Government RSE guidance. This provision aims to be inclusive and factually correct, and encourages learners to critically engage with the materials used. The RSE curriculum will be taught by staff using cross-cutting themes and discreet lessons within all related Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE), using teaching strategies and techniques which are developmentally appropriate and meet learners' needs. This will also help to avoid a 'single issue' approach where each lesson covers a different RSE issue, isolated from other learning.

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 Wellbeing:** helping learners to draw on factual sources regarding their sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing, 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.

The Welsh Government is committed to covering the following themes in RSE: relationships, rights and equity, sex, gender and sexuality; bodies and body image, sexual health and wellbeing; violence; safety and support. These themes are interwoven into the above strands.

As the school introduces the new Curriculum for Wales as a phased roll out, RSE will also be taught through Personal and Social Education (PSE), and for some year groups the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE). The teaching of topics will be in line with requirements outlined in the RSE Code.

The relevant learning outcomes from the WG PSE Framework in Key Stage 3 are:

- Know the law relating to various aspects of sexual behaviour.
- Know about contraception, sexually transmitted infections and HIV within the context of relationships.
- Recognise the features of safe and potentially abusive relationships.
- Understand the role of marriage, the importance of stable family relationships and the responsibilities of parents.
- Understand the range of emotions they experience and how to develop strategies for coping with negative feelings.
- Understand the benefits of accessing different sources of information, support and advice.
- Be able to make and maintain friendships, and to begin to negotiate behaviour in personal relationships.
- Understand what they believe to be right and wrong actions, and the moral dilemmas involved in life situations.

The relevant learning outcomes from the WG PSE Framework in KS4 are:

- Understand the range of sexual attitudes, relationships and behaviours in society.
- Understand the importance of sexual health and the risks involved in sexual activity, including potential sexual exploitation.
- Understand the features of effective parenting, and the effect of loss and change in relationships.
- Know how to access professional health advice and personal support with confidence. Overall we aim to cover:
 - Accessing health and support –
 - Local and national
 - Turning to trusted adults (including parents/carers)
 - Unplanned pregnancy – pregnancy choices
 - Emotional literacy
 - Confidentiality – in school and in GPs/sexual health services

Enabling Human Rights and the UNCRC

As the world around us evolves at a rapid and significant rate, we will uphold learners' rights under the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to education (Article 28) which prepares them to understand others (Article 29) through an inclusive, holistic, evidence-based and participative RSE Curriculum. In this way, learners develop an understanding of how rights are related to all aspects of RSE and contribute to the freedom, dignity, wellbeing and safety of all people. This also helps learners to understand the importance of equity, recognising the importance of rights in ensuring fair treatment for all.

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)

Our school also links learning to the United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and United Nations Enable.

Everyone who works with children and young people at Cantonian High School will always do what is best for each learner, as part of our whole-school approach to RSE (Article 3).

Responding to Pupils' Needs

Cantonian High School 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.

Ground Rules / Creating a Safe Learning Environment

We endeavor 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, which 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.

Dealing with Questions

If staff are asked questions by learners during RSE lessons (which may be of a sensitive nature) they will never disclose their personal experiences. They will use their professional judgement in providing answers which are age- and stage-appropriate to the age and maturity of the learner or of other learners who may be listening. There may be times when teachers feel that pupils should be advised to ask another adult, probably a parent/carer, and if this happens, teachers will try to inform parents/carers if the child is willing or check with them that the issue has been dealt with.

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. If a teacher does not know the answer to a question, they will acknowledge this and research the question later.

Sometimes an individual learner may ask an explicit or inappropriate question. If this situation arises, the learner will be reminded of the class agreement/ ground rules. If a question feels inappropriate for a learner, or for the whole class, or raises concerns, the teacher will acknowledge the question and reassure the learner that they will attend to it after the lesson on an individual basis. In this way, the learner will feel they have been treated with respect, but inappropriate personal information will not be shared with the rest of the class.

RSE for Learners with Additional Learning Needs

The RSE curriculum must be provided for learners with additional learning needs. Staff at Cantonian High School consider how best to meet the needs of individual learners whose additional needs mean that their understanding of sexual health and wellbeing may not match their chronological age. All staff, including ancillary staff, nurses and carers are aware of the school's approach to RSE when working with learners with additional learning needs.

Use of Local, National and School Level Data

At Cantonian High School we use a range of available health and wellbeing data to develop a bespoke RSE curriculum which meets the needs of all learners. This includes data captured through surveys such as the School Health Research Network (SHRN).

Working with Parents / Carers

As part of the Curriculum for Wales, RSE is mandatory for all learners aged 3 – 16. This means that parents / carers can no longer withdraw their child from RSE in line with the roll-out of the curriculum in each year group. However, Cantonian High School acknowledges that parents and carers have an important influence and role to play in terms of delivering messages about relationships and sexuality education.

Parents and carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships and maintaining the culture and ethos of the family. As a result, we see RSE as a shared responsibility and seek to keep parents /carers informed about this RSE Policy, the RSE curriculum, and resources where possible.

We support parents / carers in understanding why high-quality, inclusive RSE at Cantonian High School is important to the development and learning of every young person. Parents / Carers are encouraged to discuss concerns they may have with their child's class or form teacher in the first instance.

The school welcomes any comments from parents and carers that are aimed at improving the school's provision in this area. In situations where parents / carers are unhappy with elements of the RSE curriculum, they are asked to contact the school following the school's Complaints Policy.

External Partnerships

Whilst we are responsible for the delivery of the RSE curriculum, we recognise the value of involving appropriate external agencies/visiting speakers to complement the RSE curriculum. This input does not substitute or replace the school and delivery of RSE. If the school is approached by an unknown external agency/speaker, then advice regarding suitability will be sought.

Good practice for when working with external agencies/visiting speakers:

- Ensure that the external agency has the right skills, knowledge and competency, and has a professional reputation for being holistic and inclusive in their approach to RSE.
- Ensure aims and learning outcomes are age-appropriate for the intended learners.
- The external agency/visiting speakers have a DBS and are considered appropriate in respect of Safeguarding Procedures.
- The school/education provision have made the external agency aware of their school's policies
- Staff will inform and prepare learners for the visit of an external agency/visiting speaker and allow them time to prepare questions prior to this.
- Staff will remain in the classroom at all times as they are responsible for the learners and behaviour management.

Accessing Sexual Health Services

Cantonian High School actively refers young people to sexual health services. Members of staff will maintain the confidence of a young person (if it is perceived that they or anyone else are not at risk of harm) and take appropriate action which can include:

- Making an appointment (by phone) on behalf of the young person.
- Escorting the young person to the service they need (the Headteacher needs to be informed of this).
- Actively referring the young person to the school nurse.

C-Card Service

At Cantonian High School we recognise that some students are sexually active. To provide students with the information and the ability to be safe, we have C-Card trained staff in school. C-Card is a scheme for young people to access free condoms and lube to improve sexual health. With help and support from trained staff, students can be provided with condoms that are the only type of protection that help prevent both sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy.

This service is provided to students who are 13 years and over and they will have a discussion with a trained staff member to ensure that they are safe and supported with their sexual health choices.

Period Dignity

Our school fully supports the Welsh Government Period Dignity Strategic 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 period products, including environmentally friendly products, that learners can access from staff.
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 and parents/carers informing them of the available free products on site, and how they can access them.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

The RSE curriculum at Cantonian High School supports learners to be able to develop their knowledge, awareness and understanding on how to recognise discriminatory behaviours, harmful sexual behaviours, unhealthy and abusive/violent relationships, whilst ensuring that all learners develop an understanding of what consent is, including developing skills on how to give and withdraw consent.

It is important that all school staff receive the appropriate Safeguarding Training. Staff understand that they have a duty to follow the school's Child Protection Policy, which follows the All Wales Child Protection Procedures / Local Authority protocol, if there is suspicion that a learner may have suffered or be at risk of suffering harm.

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.
- Always follow the school's Child Protection Policy if there are child protection concerns.

Where appropriate, for learners aged 13 and above, staff can issue/signpost them to information on contraception and where they can access local sexual health provision. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales) states that young people under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity, therefore if a learner under the age of 13 discloses that they are sexually active, the school's safeguarding protocol must be followed.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Peer-on-peer sexual harassment is taken very seriously at Cantonian High School. The whole-school approach to RSE ensures that a preventative and proactive approach is adopted to tackle the issue. This includes providing learners with assurance that staff will take every incidence of peer-on-peer sexual harassment seriously and work in partnership with the learners, parents/carers, and external agencies where appropriate, to deal with any incidents.

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.

Signposting to Services

Learners can access a range of information and advice through:

- Form Tutors and Heads of Year
- The school's wellbeing staff
- Cardiff and Vale School Nursing Team
- Cardiff and Vale School Nursing 'CHAT Health' text service: 07520 615718 (age 11–19)
- Cardiff and Vale School Nursing 'Parent line' text service: 07312 263178 (age 5-11)
- Cardiff YMCA Healthy Relationships Service (age 11-25)
- Childline
- Meic
- School-based counselling

Related Policies

This policy is not to be read in isolation. All staff at Cantonian High School are aware of and adhere to, relevant school/WG policies which complement RSE.

These include:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding / Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Drug & Alcohol
- Equality & Diversity
- Internet Safety / e-safety

Dissemination

All staff and Governors receive a copy of the policy. The policy is also available on the school's website.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Agreed by Headteacher:



Agreed by Chair of Governors:



Date of Issue: Summer 2024

Date for Review: Autumn 2026