

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE)

Information for schools, settings, parents and carers

Teachers and education experts from across Wales have been working together to develop Curriculum for Wales.

We need to help all our young people to excel in all aspects of life, so they grow into adults who are healthy, confident individuals. Education should encourage and support young people to respect themselves and others, to value diversity, and give them the ability to build healthy, respectful relationships.

Curriculum for Wales will include developmentally appropriate relationships and sexuality education (RSE).

What is RSE?

Young people should have the right to access information that keeps them safe from harm. This includes learning about healthy relationships, keeping safe, online and offline, and being confident to raise issues with responsible adults.

RSE is designed to safeguard all our children and young people, supporting them to develop knowledge, skills and behaviours that will assist in protecting them throughout their lives.

This is critical to building a society which treats others with understanding and empathy, whatever their ethnicity, social economic background, disability, sex, gender or sexuality.



What is included within the RSE Code?

The Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Code provides detail for schools and settings on what must be taught and when. We encourage parents and carers to read the published RSE Code which provides clarity about what their children will learn and when. Cross-cutting themes for designing your curriculum – Hwb (gov.wales)



Great care has been taken to ensure that all learning within RSE will be developmentally appropriate, and the teachers, stakeholders and professionals involved in its development have ensured that this is reflected within the RSE Code.

The RSE section of the Curriculum for Wales framework contains:

- the RSE Code – what will be taught and at what phase
- statutory guidance – this supports schools in developing their RSE curriculum.

Developmentally appropriate relationships and sexuality education (RSE)

There are legal requirements for RSE to be developmentally appropriate, including the resources schools use in implementing RSE.

Topics like online safety, consent and sexual health are all included in the RSE Code, but at developmentally appropriate phases so learners aren't exposed to things that aren't appropriate to their age and development.

At a younger age, for example, they will be taught about treating each other with kindness and empathy. As children grow older, they will gain an understanding of topics such as online safety, consent and sexual health – all of which will be handled in a sensitive way.

Learning in RSE will also include recognising, understanding and speaking out about all forms of discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect and to seek support and advice on a range of issues from trusted sources.

RSE is also legally required to be objective, critical and pluralistic: meaning schools and settings must provide factual information and on questions of values, a range of views on a given subject, commonly held within society.



Involving parents and carers

The statutory guidance is very clear that we expect schools to work closely with parents and carers to make sure they understand what their children are learning.

Schools and settings should have clear lines of communication in relation to RSE and should engage with learners, parents, carers and the wider community with learning and teaching in RSE.

Schools should keep parents and carers fully aware of what is being learned and why, with opportunity for questions and clarification. The RSE Code has been published to give parents and carers clarity and transparency about what their children will learn and when.

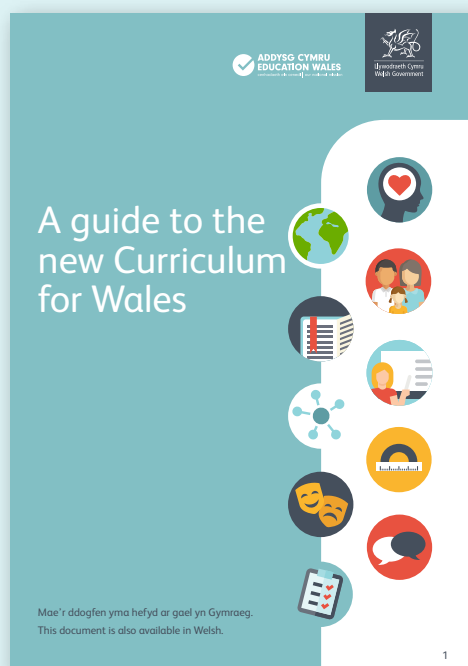


Useful links

Parent and carer curriculum guide

Relationships and sexuality education statutory guidance and code

RSE playlist



Case study

Blaenymaes Primary School, Swansea

Relationships and sexuality education includes learning about healthy relationships, empathy, keeping safe, and being confident to raise issues with responsible adults.

Year 1 learners at Blaenymaes Primary School in Swansea learned about healthy relationships during a classroom session with the Spectrum Project. The session included developmentally appropriate learning around topics like consent, diversity, and relationships. Learners took part in activities such as making a “friendship soup”, to understand what qualities make a good friend.

During the session, the deputy headteacher said: “It’s really important that we’re looking after pupils’ well-being and nurturing them to become healthy and confident individuals, and I think the RSE curriculum lends itself to that. They’re building up friendships, they’re learning how to be empathetic to others, and they’re just feeling part of a team but valuing each others differences and understanding that that’s okay, at an age-appropriate level.”



Watch the video case study ‘Relationships and sexuality education with Year 1 at Blaenymaes Primary’.

