

Statement

The Department for Education is introducing compulsory Relationships Education for primary pupils and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for secondary pupils.

IRIS School believes that RSE is important for our pupils and our school. Through RSE subjects, we want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe – we want to equip them with knowledge they need to have the self-confidence to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life and to make a positive contribution to society.

At IRIS we are committed to teach age-appropriate sex education alongside relationships education. The school has the flexibility to deliver the content in a way that is suitable and sensitive to the needs and religious background of our pupils. RSE can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

RSE includes very sensitive topics, and as an Islamic school we need to deliver it through our faith values and in line with the statutory guidance. RSE serves to enhance the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for a fulfilled life as adults. In its best sense, RSE enables pupils to reinforce their Islamic values.

RSE is about giving pupils the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Health Education is giving pupils information to make well-informed, positive choices about their own health and wellbeing. It is also important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Data Protection have been considered in the development of this policy statement.

Safeguarding

The school aims to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them. The school's aims are to support its pupils, but no individual member of staff will offer absolute confidentiality. It may be necessary that if a child protection issue arises then certain confidences must be passed on. The procedure for this is outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. RSE provides within a learning environment which is safe for the children, young people and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable. Teaching RSE and Personal Safety enables the School to fulfil its statutory duty to prevent 'peer-on-peer' abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). We also recognise that effective teaching may alert children to what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, including inappropriate sexual behaviour and abusive relationships, and that there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. RSE ensures children and young people are clearly informed of their rights, such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding. Teaching staff should also be aware that pupils with SEND are likely to be more vulnerable and less able to protect themselves from exploitation and harmful

influences. Teachers should be aware that effective RSE may lead to disclosures about child protection issues and when such issues arise, they will follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy if they have any concerns.

Equality and Diversity

Inclusion is a strong feature of our school. The RSE programme responds to the needs of individual pupils and takes the cultures, faiths, and family backgrounds of all pupils into consideration. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) are given extra RSE support. Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a responsibility to ensure the best for all pupils at our schools irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, and sex. As a result, RSE will be sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may need to adapt and change over time to reflect the needs of the particular cohort. The school may also take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic.

Data Protection

The school will process personal data of the pupils (which may be held on paper, electronically, or otherwise). The school treats this data in an appropriate and lawful manner, in accordance with the School General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The principles say that personal data must be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it is processed
- Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- Kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed
- Processed in a way that ensures it is appropriately secure

This Policy Statement sets out how the school aims to comply with these principles. The RSE policy has been developed in consultation with stakeholders, to ensure it meets the needs of the community. Parents of children in Secondary School have also been informed about their rights to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education aspects of RSE.

For all questions in relation to this Policy Statement please contact the Leader of the Pupil Health and Wellbeing Team (Mrs Ream) on her email address: ream04@outlook.com

To be reviewed Sep.2024