Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

This Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy has been written in line with Welsh Government (WG) Statutory Guidance, the RSE Code and Legislative Summary (January 2022) for schools and educational provisions in Ceredigion Local Authority.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this RSE Policy is to provide all stakeholders (learners, staff, parents/carers, governors, and external organisations) at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** with information about our Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) provision.

High quality RSE allows for all learners to grow and develop in a safe environment to understand how to become healthy adults who are able to be critical thinkers, whilst developing positive and healthy relationships with others. It is important that learners are able to explore, develop and nurture positive attitudes towards equality, gender diversity and respectful relationships, and 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.

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 to education (Article 28) which prepares them to understand others (Article 29) through an inclusive, holistic, evidence-based and participative RSE Curriculum.

Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn fully complies with the legal statutory duty stated in the RSE Code from Welsh Government, and the Equalities Act 2010.

We provide learners with the opportunity to have a say about the RSE Curriculum they receive, and support parents/carers in understanding why high quality, inclusive RSE is vital to the development and learning of every learner.

2. Legislation on RSE and the Equalities Act (2010)

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

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 are no longer allowed to withdraw their child/young person from RSE.
- Schools will design their own RSE Curriculum but the content has to be set within the context of these broad and interlinked learning strands:
    - Relationships and identity
    - Sexual health and well-being
    - Empowerment, safety and respect
- The RSE Curriculum must be developmentally appropriate for learners. This means schools and settings must take account of a range of factors including the learner's age; knowledge and maturity; any additional learning needs and anticipating their physiological and emotional development. Learning within the RSE Curriculum is to be linked to the following phases:
    - **Phase 1**: from age 3
    - **Phase 2**: from age 7
    - **Phase 3**: from age 11

  This link outlines the learning expected in each phase from page 5.

- 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.

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/education provision must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage.

Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn 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.

3. Related Policies

Those with responsibility for RSE at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** are aware and adhere to relevant school policies which complement RSE. These include:

- Data Protection
- Safeguarding / child protection
- Anti-bullying (including procedures for dealing with homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying)
- Substance Misuse
- Equality and Diversity
- Online Safety (see WG document: Sexting: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Learners)
- Transgender Guidance

4. Responsibility for RSE

In line with a Whole-School Approach, RSE is everyone's responsibility at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn**. However, the Governing Body, Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, and RSE Lead have specific roles to ensure the careful, considerate and successful implementation of RSE and a safe environment for all learners.

Role of the School/Provision Governing Body

The role of the Governing Body at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** is to:

- Determine and authorise RSE Policy, ensuring it is compliant with the Statutory Requirements outlined in the RSE Code
- Ensure that curriculum provision for RSE is noted clearly in the high level curriculum statement that the school must make public.
- Ensure the RSE Policy is up to date and reviewed annually.
- Ensure the RSE Policy is widely disseminated throughout the whole school community.

Role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** is to:

- Co-ordinate the formulation **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** RSE Policy by involving all relevant stakeholders ensuring effective communication.
- Inform all staff and adults involved with the delivery of RSE within the school of 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 with suitable professional training.
- Provide support to the RSE Lead where appropriate, including supporting any challenges from learners, parents and carers.
- Determine and allocate funding allowance for RSE Curriculum to support resources/professional training/external organisations costs.
- Review the RSE Policy and make appropriate changes and amendments annually according to need.

Role of the RSE Lead

The role of the RSE Lead at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** is to:

- Develop and implement a **developmentally appropriate** RSE Curriculum for all learners, in line with the statutory requirements outlined in the RSE Code.
- Monitor and evaluate RSE in conjunction with other subject leaders to ensure that RSE is integrated effectively across all Areas of Learning Experience (AoLE).
- Monitor and evaluate the scheme of work and the suitability of resources.
- Ensure pupil voice is reflected within the RSE Curriculum and emotional support is provided.
- Liaise with outside agencies and co-ordinate their involvement with the RSE programme where appropriate.
- Liaise with parents and carers where needed regarding RSE Curriculum.
- Liaise with the Local Authority and Healthy Schools Team.

5. Monitoring and Evaluating RSE

RSE Policy Implementation will be monitored by the Headteacher and Governing Body, and should be reviewed and up-dated annually in line with the local authority safeguarding audit.

When the RSE Policy is reviewed, learners, teachers, governors, families, and outside agencies (where applicable) will be consulted to ensure it is effective and meeting statutory requirements.

The RSE Curriculum will be monitored and evaluated by the RSE Lead annually to ensure that it remains relevant, up to date and is meeting the needs of all learners.

6. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

The RSE curriculum at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** 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 and understand that they have a duty to follow the Safeguarding Protocol at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** ,which will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019 / Ceredigion LEA protocol if there is suspicion that a learner may have suffered or be at risk of suffering significant harm.

Good quality RSE delivered in an inclusive and safe environment could lead to an increase in disclosures from learners. It is important that learners are sensitively informed that school/education provision staff cannot guarantee confidentiality if they disclosure anything to them, as staff have a duty to care for them and to report anything which causes concern. It is important that learners are supported adequately by an appropriate member of staff.

If a Safeguarding concern is suspected or identified, staff must ensure that they immediately notify the School's Designated Safeguarding Person, or the Deputy DSP in their absence, whom will be responsible for taking the appropriate action. It is never the responsibility of staff to disclose learners' sexual orientation or gender identity to others without their permission.

Where appropriate, for learners aged 13 and above, staff can issue/signpost learners to information on contraception and where they can access local sexual health provision. Remember, The Sexual Offenses 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 Safeguarding Protocol for **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** must be followed.

It is recognised by Estyn that peer-on-peer sexual harassment is highly prevalent in the lives of young learners and the whole school approach to RSE at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** ensures that a preventative and proactive approach is adopted to tackle the issue. WG are working on recommendations for schools following Estyn's report which are expected in the autumn term (2022).

This includes providing learners with assurance that school/education provision 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.

In order to create an inclusive and safe learning environment for learners throughout their RSE Curriculum, the RSE Lead and other school/education provision staff will

receive regular, high quality professional learning opportunities. This will ensure that staff feel prepared and able to support learners on topics like relationships, consent, sexuality, the law, diversity, gender transitioning, and harmful sexual behaviours.

7. What does Good Quality RSE look like?

Good quality RSE is protective, preventative and underpinned by a developmentally appropriate needs led, rights based approach which takes a positive view of human sexuality and relationships.

Good quality RSE should also:

- Provide developmentally appropriate, 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 developmentally appropriate, objective, supportive and inclusive information about growing up, body changes, healthy relationships, reproductive and sexual health.
- Provide developmentally appropriate information on where learners can access help and support services in relation to RSE.
- Be coproduced by the school community, including the voice of learners, parents, carers and input from relevant stakeholders who support its delivery. See Designing Your Curriculum document.
- Be developmentally appropriate. See RSE Code Phases.
- Assess learners to gauge an understanding of where they are on their developmental journey.

The RSE Curriculum at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** 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/education provision.

8. The RSE Curriculum and how it will be Implemented

Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn seeks to provide a high quality pluralistic RSE Curriculum which is inclusive, factually correct, and encourages learners to critically engage with the material taught to them. The RSE Curriculum will be taught by trained staff using cross-cutting themes within the Areas of Learning Experience (AoLE) in lessons, using teaching strategies and techniques according to the learners needs. This means that RSE will not only be delivered through Health and Wellbeing but through all AoLE's.

If school/education provision is a Primary provision:
The RSE Curriculum will be taught through the Health and Well-being AoLE and cross-cutting themes and will incorporate all five statements of what matters. The teaching of topics will be in line with requirements outlined in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the RSE Code.

If school/education provision is a Secondary provision:
As the school introduces the new Curriculum for Wales as a phased roll out (starting with Year 7 in 2022/23), 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). The teaching of topics will be in line with requirements outlined in Phase 3 of the RSE Code.

The RSE Curriculum should be based on three strands outlined in the RSE Code:

- **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.

If staff are asked questions by learners during RSE lessons (which maybe be of a sensitive nature) they will never disclose their personal experiences, and they are to 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.

9. RSE for Learners with Additional Learning Needs

The RSE Curriculum must be provided for learners with additional learning needs. Staff at **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** must consider how best to meet the needs

of individual learners whose additional needs means that their understanding of sexual health and well-being may not match their chronological age. Learners with more severe needs can be very vulnerable so teachers have a responsibility to include elements of the RSE curriculum within the provision from a very young age in order to ensure that they have an understanding of 'stranger danger' and 'private and public touch' by the time they reach puberty.

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

10. RSE for Disadvantaged Learners

The RSE Curriculum must demonstrate equitable practice and be available to all learners, regardless of personal or social circumstances. Equitable schools and provisions will recognise and understand that advantages and barriers exist in education, acknowledge each learner experiences education differently, and will work hard to correct any educational imbalance. At best, this involves schools and provisions offering additionality to overcome disadvantage and commit more time and effort to support disadvantaged young people.

To that end, it is essential schools and provisions ensure each learner has equal opportunity to engage with the RSE curriculum. At times, it may be beneficial to repeat sessions or offer opportunities for further discussion. Teachers and school staff, in this situation, often need to play a parental role and offer ongoing support. In more complex cases, schools and provisions should consider whether the young person is entitled to more bespoke, person-centred access to this part of the curriculum.

It is a common misconception that deprivation is exclusively associated with poverty. It is true, of course, that disadvantaged learners live in poverty; however, true disadvantage spans far wider. In Mid Wales, for example, all learners must overcome rural poverty and have poor access to services and opportunities when compared to other learners across urban parts of Wales. In relation to RSE, it may be that families need additional support to engage young people in diverse, well-balanced, and developmentally appropriate conversations relating to RSE. Again, it may be purposeful here for the schools develop a secure and safe place, with a suitable professional, for young people to speak openly about any questions, concerns, or beliefs they may have.

11. Learner Voice in RSE

As stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children and young people have the right to be consulted on decisions being made about their lives (Article 12). To ensure the RSE Curriculum meets learners' needs and addresses emerging trends, **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** will consult learners and involve them in the curriculum content for RSE and retain flexibility to address the issues learners identify.

The RSE Lead will undertake regular evaluation with learners to ensure the RSE Curriculum is as robust, purposeful and engaging as possible.

12. Working with Parents and Carers

The RSE Code has withdrawn parent and carers right to withdraw their child from RSE – it is **mandatory** for all learners aged 3-16. However, **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** acknowledges that parent and carers have an important influence and role to play in terms of delivering messages about sex and relationships. Parent 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 and carers informed about this RSE Policy, the RSE Curriculum, and resources where possible.

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 and carers are unhappy with elements of the RSE Curriculum, they are asked to follow the Complaints Policy for **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn**.

13. Working with External Agencies

Whilst **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** is 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 is not to substitute or replace the schools/education provisions delivery of RSE. If the school/educational provision 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:

- Complete research to check that the external agency has the right skills, knowledge and competency, and has a reputable and professional reputation for being holistic and inclusive in their approach to RSE.

- An agreement of aims and learning outcomes for the visit to ensure the content is age appropriate for the intended learners.
- The external agency/visit 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 schools policies and their expectations for their visit.
- 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.

14. RSE Resources

It is vital that the RSE Lead uses appropriate RSE resources to support the RSE Curriculum.

At **Ysgol Penrhyn-coch ac Ysgol Penllwyn** we use the following resource to deliver developmentally appropriate RSE:

Welsh Resources
- **Hwb** – Curriculum for Wales RSE guidance and teaching materials.
- **Spectrum (Hafan Cymru)** – Healthy relationships, safety, consent, and stereotypes.
- **NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe** – Personal safety and trusted adults.
- **Public Health Wales** – Health and wellbeing resources.

Relationships and Wellbeing
- **SEAL** – Whole-school PSHE and RSE scheme.
- **Brook** – Consent, puberty, relationships, and sexual health.
- **Anna Freud Centre** – Emotional wellbeing and resilience.

Online Safety
- **Common Sense Education** – Digital citizenship and online relationships.
- **UK Safer Internet Centre** – Online safety lessons and guidance.
- **Childnet** – Online behaviour, friendships, and cyberbullying.

Equality and Inclusion
- **Stonewall Cymru** – LGBTQ+ inclusion and family diversity.
- **Diverse Cymru** – Equality, identity, and anti-discrimination.
- **Show Racism the Red Card** – Respect, diversity, and belonging.

ALN-Friendly Resources
- **Widgit Online** – Symbol-supported materials.
- **Twinkl Cymru** – Welsh-language and ALN-adapted resources.
- **Image in Action** – Visual and accessible learning materials.

Useful Books
- **The Colour Monster** (emotions)

- **Love Makes a Family** (family diversity)
- **Amazing You!** (body awareness)
- **What's Happening to Me?** (puberty)

All of the above are supplemented by age-appropriate books.

15. 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*	*Comment*
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.				
Contingencies are in place to support children and young people who may be emotionally affected by the lesson and who may feel the need to leave.				
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.				
<u>Next steps</u>				

Completed by:	Date:	

(Adapted from Welsh Government Circular No: 019/2010, Sex Education Forum 'Whole School RSE Audit Tool': 2018, WNHSS National Quality Award by Monmouthshire Healthy Schools Scheme May 2022)