



Western  
Learning  
Federation



# Riverbank School



Learning together to be the best we can

**RATIFIED BY GOVERNORS**

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**DATE REVIEWED**

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**DATE FOR REVIEW**

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**DATE PUBLISHED**

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## Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually unless change of circumstances or legislation requires it to be amended earlier.

**SIGNED**

**DATE**

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Chair of Governors

**SIGNED**

**DATE**

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Executive Headteacher

**SIGNED**

**DATE**

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Deputy Executive Headteacher

**SIGNED**

**DATE**

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Head of School

## The values and principles

The federation is underpinned by a set of values that define the culture of the three federated schools.

### Our Principles

**Honesty**

**Responsibility**

**Positivity**

**Trust**

**Empathy**

**Patience**

**Respect**

**Kindness**

### Our Values

- We celebrate our differences.
- We have a shared sense of belonging.
- We play, laugh, smile and celebrate success.
- We have a positive attitude.
- We learn from experiences to develop life and independent skills.
- We follow our dreams and aspirations.
- We care for our own and wider environment.
- We improve quality of life.

#### Definition

**Values** One's judgement of what is important in school life.

**Principles** Morally correct behaviour and attitudes.

## Rights Respecting Schools

Every child has rights "without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status"

## **Western Learning Federation**

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Learning together to be the best we can



Learning to achieve



Learning for Living

Vincent Road, Cardiff, CF5 5AQ

Riverbank School provides primary education for children aged between four and eleven, all with a statement for additional learning needs. The majority of our pupils have a primary diagnosis for severe learning difficulties, speech language and communication difficulties, autistic spectrum condition and global learning delay.

At Riverbank School we aim that every pupil should have the opportunity to learn and develop to the full within an environment where they are happy, ambitious, capable learners.

Pupils will take increasing responsibility for their own learning in becoming healthy confident individuals.

All pupils will be supported and challenged to become enterprising, creative contributors to prepare them to reach their full potential in life and work.

We believe every child has the right to an education of high quality where everyone is valued and encouraged to respect others.

We believe that every pupil has the right to develop their knowledge about their culture, community and society in order to help them become ethically informed citizens of Wales and the wider world.

We are fully committed to developing and implementing the four purposes of the curriculum, as they will apply within a special school context. In summary we want all of the pupils at Riverbank School to be;

- **Ambitious**, capable learners;
- **Enterprising**, creative contributors;
- **Ethical**, informed citizens;
- **Healthy**, confident individuals.

Our vision at Riverbank School is to achieve, through purposeful partnerships, a high quality education for all pupils.

The purpose of Riverbank School is to create a professional environment in which pupils can receive their curriculum entitlement. We have high expectations and hope to enable pupils to achieve the following goals:

- high achievement for all, regardless of ability, gender, class and ethnicity.
- To learn how to learn and to learn how to play.
- To gain the best possible level of independence appropriate to their age and ability.
- To be able to make appropriate, informed choices.
- To be aware of danger and the need for safety at all times.
- To be able to communicate in a range of settings and for different audiences.
- To be able to behave and respond appropriately in a range of different situations, with regard for the feelings and the wellbeing of others.
- To celebrate success and be aware of their own strengths and skills, leading to raised self-esteem.

In order to achieve these goals, we begin with the individual needs of the child. These needs encompass the whole child – not just the academic, but also the social, behavioural, medical and moral needs.

- We ensure that our curriculum is delivered at the appropriate level to meet these needs.
- We believe that it is not simply a case of what we deliver, but also the way in which we deliver it.
- We aim to use pupils' strengths, the strengths of adults around them and the environment to enhance and provide opportunities for learning and success.
- Through the assessment of our pupils' needs, abilities and levels of attainment, we record and report on progress and inform our planning of the curriculum.
- We monitor and evaluate the pupils' learning and our teaching in order to continuously strive to raise standards

Relationships and Sexuality Education offers opportunities for learners to explore how their experiences, decisions, social and cultural interactions, and relationships, drawn from the interpersonal level, through local, national, United Kingdom and global contexts, can help them grow in empathy and recognise the dignity and respect due to others, and to the living world around them. It is about nurturing and developing learners' understanding of the influences that can affect them, both positively and negatively, as they seek to develop and establish a range of respectful, healthy relationships. This includes learning about:

- Rights and Equity
- Relationships
- Sex, Gender and Sexuality
- Bodies and Body Image
- Sexual Health and Well-being
- Violence, Safety and Support

The core principles of Relationships and Sexuality Education are that it should be:

- inclusive
- holistic
- relevant, engaging and co-produced
- creatively designed
- empowering and transformative
- protective and preventative.

Developing Relationships and Sexuality Education through different areas of learning and experience gives learners a rich and wide-ranging view of human relationships and sexuality from a variety of disciplines.

## **UNRC School**

As a Rights Respecting School we are committed to embedding the principles and values of the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This policy enables our learners to understand and advocate for the following articles of the convention:

**Article 12:** Every child has the right to be heard.

**Article 28:** Every child has the right to an education.

**Article 29:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

**Article 33:** Protect children from the use of illegal drugs

**Article 34:** Protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation

**Article 42:** Every child has the right to know their rights.

## **Introduction:**

This policy addresses the legal requirements for RSE as required by the RSE Code for Wales (2021). Our school's policy on RSE has been created in line with guidance from the following documents:

- Section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

## **Aims:**

Our aim is to deliver an RSE curriculum that is positive, protective and preventative, considering 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

This will be achieved through:

- Anatomically correct language that is used by teachers and health professionals contributing to the RSE programme and learners are encouraged to use the same terms during teaching and learning.
- RSE will be taught in mixed gender groups with follow up single sex groups appropriate to the needs of learners.
- Internet Safety will be addressed through Health and Well-being and DCF sessions.

As online social networking opportunities increase, children and young people need to know how to use the internet and mobile technology safely and responsibly. Specifically, pupils need to be aware of:

- The potential risks of the online environment
- What to do and to whom to go when feeling unsafe

This Policy was created following consultation with Staff.

#### **Links with other policies:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Food and Fitness Policy
- Substance Use and Misuse Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Pupil Participation Policy
- E- Safety Policy
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding/Child Protection
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Intimate Care Policy

#### **Rationale:**

Riverbank School aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, emotional and physical development of every learner and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges of adult life.

The RSE curriculum at Riverbank School has been developed by staff to reflect the individual, holistic and inclusive needs of our pupils. The key priority is to



ensure that all pupils, irrespective of their abilities and needs make progress and have access to exciting and stimulating learning experiences throughout their time at school.

We recognise that flexibility in terms of balance within the curriculum is important to ensure relevance for our pupils. Teachers are given autonomy to develop, adapt and refine the RSE curriculum commensurate to pupils' individual needs and abilities. A graduate and multi faceted holistic approach to the delivery ensures all pupils have access to relevant experiences and learning in RSE. The RSE curriculum is delivered holistically as well as explicitly where relevant and appropriate.

The governors and staff of our school believe that RSE is an essential element in a balanced and holistic education. RSE in our school is taught in the context of the Curriculum for Wales. We believe that a well planned RSE programme will equip learners with the skills and knowledge necessary to help them to keep themselves safe and to enable them to make responsible choices.

## **RSE Curriculum**

RSE is taught in using a cross curricula and multi-sensory approach which can be categorised using the three broad strands below:

- **Relationships and identity**
- **Sexual health and well-being**
- **Empowerment, safety and respect:**

### **Relationships and Identity**

Within the Relationships and Identity strand learners develop the knowledge and skills they need to develop healthy, safe, and fulfilling relationships with others and helping them to make sense of their thoughts and feelings. This is achieved through:

- They will recognise and value the different types of relationships that reflects the diversity of the society in which they are part of including LGBTQ+.
- Developing empathy, compassion and communication skills that are allow them to explore learners' relationships now and the relationships they will form in the future.
- By using the UNRC to support respect, understanding and equitable treatment for others, whatever their sex, gender, sexuality, faith or belief.
- Through developing both their sense of self and their sense of everyone being unique and how this is informs a person's identity and individuality. This supports learners to understand how identity, relationships and sexuality are informed by biology, technology and social, cultural and religious norms and that these may change over time.
- To recognise positive and harmful behaviours, speaking out and asking for help if necessary.

## **Sexual Health and Well-Being**

The Sexual Health and Well-being strand helps learners to draw on factual sources regarding their sexual and reproductive health and well-being, allowing them to make informed decisions throughout their lives. Within this strand learners will be taught:

- 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 and be affected by society and how this relates to their own well-being
- The health issues related to relationships and sexuality
- An understanding of how sexuality and sexual health affects our well-being.

This will be delivered in a developmentally appropriate way with our younger learners understanding the importance of maintaining personal health and well-being, including hygiene, and how this impacts on themselves and others.

As our learners developmentally mature they will explore how physical changes have an impact on well-being and relationships. Learning also focuses on menstrual well-being and conditions which can affect the reproductive system. Where and if appropriate learners will develop an understanding of the possible outcomes of the decisions made relating to sexual health and relationships.

## **Empowerment, Safety and Respect**

Within the Empowerment, Safety and Respect strand pupils will learn about protecting themselves and others 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. This will include:

- 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.

## **UNCRC and RSE**

Under the UNCRC pupils' access to RSE allows them to understand and advocate for the following rights:

- 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)

## **Progression**

The RSE Code for Wales (2021) outlines three phases of teaching and learning which will be used by teachers to inform their curriculum development of RSE in the following ways:

Phase 1- from age 3

Phase 2- from age 7

Phase 3- from age 11

Teachers will take into consideration learners' social, physical, emotional and cognitive development and needs during their planning to deliver specific topics at the developmentally appropriate time which include:

## **Puberty**

Learners need to be prepared for puberty so that they have the knowledge and confidence to manage the physical and emotional changes. All children need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical and emotional changes.

## **Menstruation**

Learners will develop their knowledge about menstruation with sensitive and adequate arrangements being made available to help girls cope with menstruation (sanitary protection and suitable disposal facilities) whilst taking into consideration the emotional and well-being impact also.

## **Masturbation**

Learners will learn about this if/when they exhibit behaviours that are focused on self exploration. If this occurs a separate sexualised behaviour plan will be developed to meet the needs of the learner including them (if appropriate), parents and carers and other professionals working with them.

The following topics or themes will be delivered on an individual basis to pupils who require the information based on their cognitive and social development to ensure they are protective and preventative in line with the RSE Code for Wales (2021):

- **Contraception**

Effective RSE in secondary schools has an important role to play in reducing teenage pregnancies. RSE combined with access to services can increase contraceptive use and reduce teenage pregnancy. Pupils will be given full information about different types of contraception, including emergency contraception, and their effectiveness. Reference to the availability of the “C” card scheme within the school will also be made. Additional guidance will be given on how to obtain confidential advice, counselling and, where necessary treatment. A balance should be struck between observing the law and the need for sensitive counselling and treatment.

- **Abortion / Termination**

The RSE programme should enable pupils to know and understand abortion, appreciate the validity of opposing views, and develop the communication skills to discuss it with parents and health professionals. The religious convictions of pupils and their parents should be respected.

- **Safe sex and STIs including HIV/AIDS**

Pupils will be given factual information and knowledge about safer sex (the use of condoms) and STIs including HIV/AIDS which will enable them to become effective users of services that help prevent/treat STIs and HIV/AIDS, understand risky behaviour and develop assertiveness skills for negotiating relationships and avoiding being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex (this should link with issues of peer pressure and other risk taking behaviour such as substance misuse and alcohol).

- **Sexual Orientation**

Pupils are encouraged to develop an understanding and respect for others regardless of their developing sexual orientation. They should be encouraged to respect and recognise diversity and differences in human life. Teachers will:

- deal with matters of sexual identity or sexual orientation honestly, sensitively and in a non-discriminatory way
- answer appropriate questions and provide factual information

Riverbank School will also offer support and guidance to all pupils, particularly lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils who feel uncertain about expressing their sexuality

If questions arise about other areas outside the curriculum then the school will inform the parents/carers so that they can deal adequately with the child's queries.

### **Multi-Agency Partnerships**

Riverbank School recognises the value of involving appropriate outside agencies and visiting speakers within the RSE programme. The school will seek input from agencies deemed suitable to complement the school's delivery of the planned RSE programme. They will be made aware of and abide by the school's RSE policy.

Teachers will inform and prepare pupils of the visit of an outside agency/visiting speaker and allow them time to prepare questions prior to the visit. This will again be where relevant and appropriate and commensurate to pupils' IEPs and needs. Teachers will remain in the classroom at all times, as they are responsible for the pupils and pupil management.

### **The Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Schemes:**

Our school participates in the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes, which promotes health education.

As participants in this scheme, we:

- Provide an RSE curriculum for all registered pupils;
- Consult with parents and carers on all matters of health education policy;
- Offer Professional Learning opportunities to deliver high quality RSE.
- Listen to the views of the children in our school regarding RSE;
- Look positively at any local initiatives that support us in providing the best RSE programme that we can devise.

### **Involving Learners:**

The views of learners will be sought through Assessment for Learning techniques and pupil evaluation questionnaires where possible. These will help shape future delivery if and when this is deemed relevant.

### **Working with parents/ guardians/carers:**

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents and carers of children at our school, through a shared understanding, trust and cooperation. We believe that through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, young people will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

To promote this objective, we:

- inform parents and carers about the school's RSE policy and practice;
- work collaboratively with other professionals including health, educational psychologists, child psychologists, OT, physiotherapists and social services.
- home-school books are used to communicate daily;
- answer any questions that parents or carers may have about the RSE of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents or carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for RSE in the school;

- encourage parents and carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents and carers about the best practice known with regard to RSE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.

### **Dealing with pupil questions**

When teachers are dealing with questions about sex and relationships (which may be of a sensitive nature) they will use their professional judgement in providing answers which are appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupil or of other pupils 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.

### **Confidentiality:**

Teachers and pupils will be informed that some information cannot remain in confidence and this is always the case where to keep confidentiality may risk harm to the pupil or another person. Where a pupil discloses anything which may have a bearing on abuse of a sexual or any other nature, the school's Child Protection procedure must be followed. This will necessarily mean telling other adults. Teachers need to make this clear to pupils in a sensitive way. The simple rule is: never promise confidentiality.

Where child protection is not an issue but information needs to be passed on for the pupil's own good, the teacher concerned will discuss with the pupil first who to tell and what might happen as a result. Wherever possible, pupils will be encouraged to seek help first from their parents.

All teachers should be reminded that they have a duty to follow the All Wales Child Protection Procedures / LA protocol if there is suspicion that a child or young person may have suffered or be at risk of suffering significant harm.

For further information on confidentiality, personal disclosures, safeguarding and child protection procedures refer to the school's safeguarding policy.

### **Schools value and character**

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the Riverbank community are treated equally with equal opportunity to access education and services irrespective of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, marriage and civil partnership.

In regular school council meetings pupils express their thoughts and opinions on whole school matters and act as representatives for their classmates, ensuring all pupils' voices are heard and their ideas valued.

We tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. Diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit Riverbank.

### **Policy review**

In light of the ongoing and rapid curriculum and assessment developments as part of the new Curriculum for Wales this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects the progress towards the full implementation of the 2021 curriculum.