

Ysgol Gynradd **Llanidloes** Primary School

Relationships and Sexuality Education 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).

This policy was adopted on 15th March 2023

Signed: _____ (Chair of the Governing Body)

Signed: _____ (Headteacher)

Reviewed: _____

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy is to provide all stakeholders (learners, staff, parents and carers, governors, and external organisations) at Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes with information about our RSE provision.

High quality RSE allows for all learners to develop their knowledge and understanding in a developmentally appropriate way in a safe environment. It equips learners to become healthy adults and critical thinkers. Effective RSE will also enable learners to develop 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. 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 Gynradd Llanidloes 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 and 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)

RSE is a statutory requirement in the 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 have to deliver. Key points are:

- RSE is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16 in Wales;
- Parents and carers are no longer allowed to withdraw their child 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 that 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.

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.

Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes 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 and partners.

3. Related Policies

Those with responsibility for RSE at Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes are aware and adhere to relevant school policies which complement RSE. These include:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding
- Anti-bullying
- Strategic equality plan
- e-Safety (see WG document: [Sexting: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Learners](#))
- Welsh Government are currently developing guidance in relation to Transgender policies which is expected to be published in September 2023 and will be included in this policy once published.

4. Responsibility for RSE

In line with a whole-school approach, RSE is everyone's responsibility at Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes. However, the governing body, headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, and RSE lead have specific roles to ensure the successful implementation of RSE and a safe environment for all learners.

Role of the School Governing Body

The role of the Llanidloes Schools' Federation governing body 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 Gynradd Llanidloes is to:

- Co-ordinate the formulation of Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes RSE Policy by involving all relevant stakeholders;
- 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 of school staff involved with the programme and seek to respond to these needs with suitable professional learning;
- Provide support to the RSE lead where appropriate, including supporting any challenges from parents or carers;
- Determine and allocate funding allowance for the RSE curriculum to support resources, professional training and external organisations costs;
- Review the RSE Policy and make appropriate changes and amendments annually.

Role of the RSE Lead

The role of the RSE lead at Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes 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 AoLE 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 that pupil voice is reflected within the RSE curriculum;
- 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.

When the RSE policy is reviewed, learners, teachers, governors, families and outside agencies (where applicable) will be consulted to ensure it is effective and meets 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 meets the needs of all learners.

6. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

The RSE curriculum at Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes supports learners to develop their knowledge, awareness and understanding on how to recognise discriminatory behaviours, harmful sexual behaviours, unhealthy and abusive and 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 Policy at Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes which will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019 and Powys LA 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 staff cannot guarantee confidentiality if they disclose 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 (DSP), or the deputy DSP in their absence, who 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.

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 Gynradd Llanidloes 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 staff will take every incidence of peer-on-peer sexual harassment seriously and work in partnership with the learners, parents or carers and external agencies where appropriate to deal with any incidents.

In order to create an inclusive and safe learning environment for learners throughout the RSE curriculum, the RSE lead and other school 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 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 Gynradd Llanidloes 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.

8. The RSE Curriculum and How it will be Implemented

Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes 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 AoLEs.

The RSE curriculum will be taught through the Health and Wellbeing 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.

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 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.

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(ALN)

The RSE curriculum must be provided for learners with ALN. Staff at Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes must 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. 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 ALN.

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 that 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 that 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 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 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 Gynradd Llanidloes will consult learners and involve them in the curriculum content for RSE and retain flexibility to address the issues that 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 carer's right to withdraw their child from RSE – it is mandatory for all learners aged 3-16. However, Ysgol Gynradd Llanidloes 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. If parents and carers are unhappy with elements of the RSE Curriculum, they are asked to get in touch with the headteacher or RSE lead and, if necessary, follow the Llanidloes Schools' Federation Complaints Policy.

13. Working with External Agencies

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

Good practice for when working with external agencies and 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 or visit speakers have a DBS check and are considered appropriate in respect of Safeguarding Procedures;
- The school has made the external agency aware of their school's policies and their expectations for their visit;
- Staff will inform and prepare learners for the visit of an external agency or 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.