





44. RSHE Policy

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Introduction

This Policy has been developed in accordance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996 as highlighted in Relationships Education, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) and Health Education Statutory guidance – 2019. The British International School of Tunis (BIST) take seriously our responsibility under section 157 of the 'Education Act of 2002' to promote the welfare of children and in consultation with teachers, pupils and their parents/ carers, set out their intentions, rationale for and approach within this Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) policy. Our RSHE programme promotes children's personal, social and economic development, as well as their health and wellbeing. It helps to give children the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens.

Policy Consultation (AY 2024 - 25)

- Pupil Council.
- PTA Representatives.
- Review of RSHE content to be sensitive nationally with staff and pupils.
- Consultation with the Ministry of Education regarding legalities in Tunisia.

RSHE Definition

The DfE guidance defines RSHE (Relationship, Sex and Health Education) as “lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health”. It is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of her or him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. The DfE identifies three main elements: “attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding”. The skills and knowledge are appropriate to their age, understanding and development to enable them to make responsible decisions about their relationships, sexual health and well-being. **N.B. In accordance with Tunisian legislation BIST will not cover all of the protected characteristics, particularly those relating to sexuality and gender.**

We strive to deliver an RSHE curriculum that aligns with British educational standards while respecting the cultural, religious, and legal framework of Tunisia. To achieve this, the following considerations are taken:

Cultural and Legal Context

Sexual Orientation: Discussions on this topic should promote respect and diversity while acknowledging Tunisian Penal Code Article 230, which criminalises same-sex relationships. This legal framework necessitates sensitivity in how these topics are introduced.

Premarital Relationships: Content addressing premarital relationships should be framed in a manner that respects cultural and religious values prevalent in Tunisia, where such relationships are socially and morally disapproved.

Explicit Sexual Education: Explicit content should remain strictly age-appropriate and avoid exceeding societal norms, to align with family expectations and cultural boundaries.

Gender Identity: Topics related to non-binary or transgender identities should consider the absence of legal recognition in Tunisia, as well as societal resistance to these concepts.

Policy Aims and Rationale

The RSHE curriculum protects, informs and nurtures all pupils and it clearly differentiates between factual teaching (biology, medicine, the law, marriage, different types of families and the composition of society) and moral teaching about relationships and values which is taught within a moral framework and from an Islamic perspective. The Curriculum is therefore taught through our PSHE, Wellbeing and Science programmes of study. In order to be culturally sensitive RSHE will be placed firmly within the context of relationships, being firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. RSHE will be in accordance with local legislation and guidelines.

Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSHE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school's aims state that we will endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes.

Curriculum Summary

RSHE gives pupils the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy, safe and prepare them for life and work anywhere in the world. Alongside developing the attributes, they need to manage their lives now and in the future.

RSHE will embrace the challenges of creating happy and successful young adults, pupils will acquire the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their own and others wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self- efficacy. Pupils will also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. This subject can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

The RSHE programme is delivered in registration, tutor time, PSHE, Wellbeing and Science lessons. Expat pupils may additionally have support from the school counsellor.

Pupils will use dialogue and debate to explore questions that will develop knowledge and understanding of the topics. Concept maps, posters and role plays will be carried out in the various topics.

Objectives

Attitudes and Virtues

To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

- To clarify/reinforce existing knowledge.
- To raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others.
- To understand the importance of safe and stable relationships that promote respect, love and care.
- To help pupils develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness, resilience) and make the most of their abilities.
- To provide the confidence to be participating members of society and to value themselves and others.
- To help gain access to relevant information and support.
- To develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle.

- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media.
- To reinforce and develop pupils' understanding of how to stay safe online.
- To prepare pupils to be positive, active global citizens.
- To place an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help as needed for themselves and others.
- Respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others.
- Responsibility for their own actions
- Making sound judgments and good choices which have integrity and which are respectful of the individual's commitments.
- Loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships free from exploitation, abuse and bullying.
- Managing conflict positively, recognising the value of difference.
- Cultivating humility, mercy and compassion, learning to forgive and be forgiven.
- Developing self-esteem and confidence, demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others.
- Building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups and so developing the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately.
- Assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

Personal and Social Skills

Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively by:

- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Empower pupils with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter).

Inclusion and Differentiated Learning

We will ensure RSHE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice- based language and how to respond and ask for help.

Content

There are three aspects of RSHE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills. These will be provided through PSHE, Wellbeing and Science lessons, in accordance with national legislation.

Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. Parents/carers will therefore be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSHE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning. Parent representatives have been consulted during the development of the RSHE programme. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSHE programme.

Children's Questions

BIST wants to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSHE can take place. They want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people. Lessons may consider questions or issues that some pupils will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When pupils ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSHE. These may be a matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children. BIST believes that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSHE programme. The use of ground rules, agreed between teachers and pupils. Some questions may raise issues, which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during class time, these will be dealt with aligned to the safeguarding policy.

Roles & Responsibilities

Responsibility for the Relationships, Sex and Health Education programme lies with the Executive Principal and SLT. However, all staff will be involved in developing the relevant attitudes and values, they will be role models for pupils of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and pupils. They will also be contributing to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

Executive Principal

- Write the RSHE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers.
- Ensure that the policy is available to parents.
- Ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and local legislation.
- Ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children; Establish a link to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used.
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum Science topics and the setting of RSHE within PSHE, according to local legislation.
- Supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSHE.

All Staff

- RSHE is a whole school issue. All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their pupils;
- Teachers will be expected to teach RSHE in accordance with the PSHE, Wellbeing and Science curricula.
- All staff should be aware of this policy and all staff should be aware of how it relates to their subject.

Confidentiality and Advice

All lessons have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the understanding of what it means to be human. Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues, which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, EP, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SLT will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans and samples of pupils' work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated annually by means of discussion with pupils, staff and parents. Strengthen communication with families to address concerns and build mutual trust regarding sensitive topics.

The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. The Executive Principal will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy and remain ultimately responsible for it.

Parental rights to withdraw their child/children

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all, or part of any sex education related curriculum, except for those parts included within the National Curriculum for Science, which are statutory.

Parents are also informed that the PSHE curriculum is an essential vehicle in supporting a school's statutory duty to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of their children.
- Encourage the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Understand British values.
- Prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, along with the coverage of the National Curriculum for Science.
- Also to understand those who come from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Children cannot be withdrawn from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships, Sex and Health Education, because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

Appendix 1: RSHE Curriculum Resources

Resources will be used as produced by the PHSE Association and Twinkl, both have been adapted to align with local legislation.

Alternative resources:

- DoSRE is a suite of free online resources designed to support the teaching of RSHE in schools. (<https://www.dosreforschools.com/>)
- For further resources on this topic, visit the PSHE Association's website, where you can search for resources. www.pshe-association.org.uk/