

Implementing statutory RSHE in an inner-city Academy. Addressing the curriculum, staffing capabilities and engaging with parents – a case study by Ellis Guilford School

Ellis Guilford School is a secondary Academy on a journey of development since joining the Creative Education Trust in November 2018. We are an Inner-City school in Basford, Nottingham which is an area of high deprivation with high rates of teenage pregnancy, knife crime and gang related crime. We have 1296 students on roll (187 SEND, 690 Pupil Premium) and have 38 languages spoken within the school showcasing our wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. PSHE, RSHE and Careers education is delivered through a 'Skills for Life' programme delivered by the tutor as an explicit lesson within the timetabled curriculum. This programme launched in 2016 and has been developed and improved by our Skills for Life lead each year. The Academy was an early adopter for RSHE and piloted small-scale delivery through the Skills for Life lead before embarking on curriculum development and resourcing along with staff training and parental consultation ready for statutory RSHE in 2020. For further information about anything in our case study contact RSE@Ellisguilfordschool.org.uk

Ellis Guilford School's Six Steps to Statutory RSHE:



Identify gaps

Identifying the gaps in the curriculum

When preparing to deliver the new statutory requirements, we first assessed our current provision against the guidance to identify where we would need to alter or add content to our curriculum. Our Skills for Life lead audited the curriculum throughout June and July 2020, with a view to identifying gaps in relation to the new guidance. It was evident we had a range of work around relationships of all types ranging from friendships to romance and love; however, we had real gaps within contraception provision, our drugs and alcohol provision was extremely dated, and the audit identified areas we needed to add due to it being new to the guidance, such as pornography. The next steps will be a yearly review of the curriculum to identify improvements based on our current model which involves collecting student and staff voice around Skills for Life content via a google form which will give us stakeholder views on delivery methods, activities, CPD opportunities and perceived areas of development.



Identify Barriers

Understanding the barriers to implementation

We then looked to identify specific barriers to our implementation of the guidance, aside from the new content. The Skills for Life lead triangulated data from learning walks, lesson drop ins and an audit of pupils' books, alongside another google form which sought the views of the staff teaching Skills for Life around their confidence and training needs. The main barriers identified were the capability of staff to deliver new content and therefore their training needs and resourcing of lessons in terms of teaching materials and additional resources such as contraception examples and period products. We also identified gaps in student knowledge as a barrier due to different local primary approaches, along with the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on schools.



With around 35 feeder primary schools of which 10 are our main providers, we decided to utilise our RSHE Link within the City who was able to support with the content our main feeders would have covered in the summer term and subsequently missed due to COVID. We have emphasised the changing adolescent body with Year 7 to bridge their gap in knowledge, along with providing remote learning based on the content missed in summer to our current students, based on the curriculum plan for summer 2020.



Diagnose staff needs

Where are the key areas staff need to develop?

To address the barriers to delivery, we have a central set of resources or 'base lessons' which are used by staff. These have been created by our Skills for Life lead (RSHE Specialist Leader in Education) to ensure they are consistent with the school lesson framework, are age-appropriate, contain suitable activities and can be delivered by non-specialist staff. To understand the training needs of staff, our Skills for Life lead requested information about their experiences teaching RSHE, perceived strengths and weaknesses and perceived areas of development. A copy of

the form can be found [here](#). The training for staff has been inhibited by COVID-19 but will take place before the scheduled delivery of our RSHE programme in the summer term via Microsoft Teams. Findings from the form showed staff stated they had a good understanding of what RSHE is and would enjoy teaching it with an overwhelming 80% looking forward to teaching RSHE at Ellis Guilford. The Skills for Life lead met with the other 20% of staff to discuss their feelings around teaching RSHE and provide examples of work to be done in lessons. This helped with understanding their concerns and reassuring staff. The key areas highlighted by staff were Intimate and Sexual Relationships and The Law. Training has been arranged for all staff around these two areas to be delivered via Microsoft Teams. Teaching staff have been sent an open invitation, however some staff have had their attendance specifically requested as they identified it as a need of theirs.



Staff Support

Ensure staff are well supported and part of the process.

To ensure staff felt well informed, all staff were introduced to the DfE guidance around RSHE as well as the Trust RSHE Policy with a simplified curriculum map of what would be taught and when. This can be viewed [here](#). An email address has been set up for all staff and students to ask questions and seek support around RSHE within the school. A sample of RSHE lesson content and resources were made available to staff to review and feedback on and a few questions were raised such as if the resources were age appropriate and how they would deal with questions around these topics. This highlighted a need to train staff around dealing with questions in class, which is one of our training modules planned for Teams delivery before RSHE teaching. To support staff in understanding the age-related needs of our RSHE programme, the Skills for Life lead has created a flow chart of topics identifying how they progress from KS1/2 into KS3/4, highlighting the prior knowledge our students will have and how we should be building on that. This can be viewed [here](#).



Regarding resourcing lessons, there are several curriculum framework tools and companies which we have invested in to help supplement our already fantastic provision, created and resourced by our Skills for Life lead. We have purchased several resources such as condoms and applicators, period products and contraception packs, to engage students further in our RSHE, with support from an experienced local RSE practitioner. Our Skills for Life lead met with an advisor for Nottingham City, as well as meeting with RSHE leads from across the trust to discuss the value of the different physical resources and settled on the things mentioned above as a starting point.

How have you engaged with parents around RSE?

We have engaged with parents around our policy and aims for RSHE and intend to involve parents thoroughly in our journey to outstanding RSHE. Parents have had an opportunity through online forms and email to respond to our RSHE policy, curriculum content and delivery methods. Our online provision was successful in terms of having parents engage with the policy and consult with us; however, the response rate was not what we had hoped for. To ensure we continue to build our parental engagement, the Skills for Life lead will hold an evening in the future when we are able to, to highlight the importance of RSHE for our students and encourage more parents to be on our RSHE parent panel in addition to four parents who had already expressed an interest. Our process involved parents receiving a letter and a text with directions to our RSHE policy and were invited to provide feedback on the aims of our RSHE provision and the approach we were taking. We created our policy through a trust-wide lens, involving the Chief Executive for Education and the RSE leads. Some parents had highlighted they didn't feel it was clear enough in relation to when and where our RSHE was delivered, so the curriculum plan attached to the policy was updated to reflect lesson numbers for each term. Positively, all parents thought the right to withdraw was clear, as was the process parents would need to take to exercise their right. We have taken a stance as a school that we are 'educating young people about the world we live in today' and look to share that message to parents also. We hope our approach will support all students to receive RSHE but have outlined a clear and simple avenue for parents to withdraw through the RSE email address.

Through the consultation, parents were given the opportunity to join a working group for RSHE within the school and as mentioned we have four parents so far, who will form this group, along with the Skills for Life lead. We have been unable to meet yet but will meet during the spring term to discuss summer provision and priorities. It is hoped we will be able to invite parents in to trial our resources and see what an RSHE lesson will look like in our school when we are able to do so. It is paramount to our school that all our school community are involved in decisions affecting our students. Our working group will meet with our Skills for Life lead to feedback on our current provision and shape future provision. This will be advertised on our website and newsletters to engage with as many stakeholders as possible.

COVID-19 and its impact on RSHE Delivery:

We delivered RSHE to Year 7 and Year 9 in the autumn term; however, other year groups were due to receive this during the Spring. With the RSHE guidance covering so much content, we will continue to deliver RSHE to our students through our Google Classrooms. Lessons are created with student friendly instructions and tasks to complete from home. As a school we aim to develop our live lesson provision throughout the Spring and our Skills for Life lead will run weekly provision for all

students. Our plan is to deliver the Sex Education requirements during the summer term face to face.