

# Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Physical Health and Mental Well-Being Policy

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Policy will be reviewed	Annually
Policy provenance	Browne Jacobson
Policy editor	Chief Executive
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Policy applies to	Castle Batch Primary School St Anne's Church Academy Priory Community School Worle Community School The King Alfred School Berrow Church Primary Academy Pawlett Primary School West Huntspill Primary School East Huntspill Primary School St Andrew's Church Junior School Burnham-on-Sea Infant School

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Trust believes that in order to create a happy and successful adult life, children and young people need to have the self-confidence to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. Relationships Education (at primary phase) and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE, at secondary phase) is about giving children and young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Health Education is giving pupils information to make well-informed, positive choices about their own health and wellbeing. The Trust recognises that physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.
- 1.2. The Trust has a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the best for all pupils at its academies irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion or sexual orientation. As a result, Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education will be sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may need to adapt and change over time to reflect the needs of the particular cohort. The Trust may also take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic.
- 1.3. The Trust is aware of the need to be mindful of and respectful to a wide variety of faith and cultural beliefs across its schools, and will make every attempt to be appropriately sensitive; equally it is essential that children and young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. The Trust believes that its pupils deserve the right to honest, clear, impartial scientific and factual information to help better form their own beliefs and values, free from bias, judgement or subjective personal beliefs of those who teach them.
- 1.4. All teaching will be sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. At the point at which the Trust considers it appropriate to teach pupils about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT), the Trust will ensure that this content is fully integrated into programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. The Trust will encourage wider pupil awareness of LGBT.
- 1.5. Our trust-wide approach to RSE has been developed following consultations led by each school with parents, pupils and staff. This ensures that our RSE Policy reflects the needs of all pupils across the trust's schools.
- 1.6. The policy will be reviewed annually and parents will be consulted in advance about significant changes.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1. Through the delivery of high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate Relationships, RSE and Health Education, the Trust aims to help prepare pupils for the onset of puberty, give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene, create a positive culture in relation to sexuality and relationships and to ensure pupils know how and when to ask for help and where to access support. By the end of their education the Trust hopes pupils will have developed resilience and feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy in preparation for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- 2.2. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education are intended to help pupils to:
  - Build healthy, respectful relationships focusing on family and friends.
  - Understand how to be healthy and be aware of potential risk areas (such as drugs and alcohol).
  - Learn about intimate relationships and sex.
  - Learn about mental wellbeing.
  - Develop key personal attributes, such as kindness, integrity, generosity and honesty.

### **3. Definition of Relationships Education and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)**

- 3.1. Relationships Education at **primary phase** is about teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults and who can support them. It includes how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy, establishing personal space and boundaries.
- 3.2. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at **secondary phase** is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that gives pupils the confidence to make sound decisions when facing risks and other challenges. It includes teaching about friendship, the importance of caring, stable and mutually supportive relationships with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship.
- 3.3. **RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation.** It teaches children and young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others, to build self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity so that they can develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.
- 3.4. RSE will outline that there are different types of committed, stable relationships, the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships, the importance of marriage as a relationship choice and why it must be freely entered into, how relationships might contribute to human happiness and the their importance for raising children, as well as highlighting the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, characteristics of successful parenting and how to judge when relationships have become unsafe as well as how to seek help or advice and report concerns about others.

### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

All members of the Trust community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of each section of the Trust and school communities are set out in detail below.

#### **4.1. Board of Trustees**

Trustees will monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy by reviewing pupils' progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes. They will hold the Chief Executive Officer and Headteachers to account for the implementation of the policy.

#### **4.2. The Chief Executive Officer**

The CEO will ensure that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is taught consistently across the schools within the Trust and will report back to the Board of Trustees on educational outcomes. They will ensure that senior staff receive regular professional development training in how to deliver Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.

#### **4.3. Headteacher**

Each Headteacher, with support from their School Leadership Team, will ensure that staff are supported and up to date with policy changes. They will ensure that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is well led, effectively managed and well planned across various subjects (to avoid unnecessary duplication of topics) and that the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation. The Headteacher will ensure that teaching is age-appropriate, delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND and that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled appropriately. They will ensure that teaching delivered by any external organisation is age-appropriate and accessible for pupils and will liaise with parents regarding any concerns or opinions regarding Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education provision and will manage parental requests for withdrawal of

pupils from non-statutory, non-science components of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.

#### **4.4. Staff**

Teachers of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education will ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education and will attend and engage in professional development training. Teachers will encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that the member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they will take this concern to their line-manager.

#### **4.5. Parents**

The Trust hopes to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents through mutual understanding, cooperation and trust. Parents are expected to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. The Trust hopes parents will create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school their child attends where they feel it is needed.

#### **4.6. Pupils**

Pupils are expected to take Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education seriously. Pupils are expected to listen, be considerate of other pupils' feelings and beliefs, comply with class-set confidentiality rules and support one another with issues that arise during class. Instances where pupils do not follow these standards of behaviour will be addressed through the Behaviour Policy.

### **5. Delivery of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education**

**5.1.** Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education will be delivered in a non-judgmental, factual way allowing scope for children and young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Teachers will tailor the delivery of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education to meet the specific needs of the pupils in that class, and to be responsive to their behaviour and development. Classes will explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions regarding sex and relationships as well as being able to differentiate between fact, opinion and belief and an understanding of the law on various topics. Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

**5.2.** Staff will ensure that all resources used in the delivery of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education are appropriate for the age and needs of their pupils. Examples of these resources are included in the Annexes of this policy.

#### **5.3. Primary schools**

Details of the Relationships Education programme for our primary schools are published on each school's website. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Staff will use teaching methods that take account of these differences and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.

#### **5.4. Secondary schools**

Details of the RSE programme for our secondary schools are published on each school's website. In our secondary schools RSE will be delivered through a range of subjects, and will build on the foundation of Relationships Education delivered in primary school.

### **6. Relationships Education and RSE: Curriculum and Outcomes**

- 6.1. The Relationships Education curriculum and learning outcomes that pupils are expected to achieve by the end of their primary education are set out on each school's website. The Trust recognises that primary-age pupils may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond the designed curriculum for Relationships Education. Teaching methods will take account of the potential different types of questions and behaviours likely to arise and staff will assess which types of teaching methods would be most appropriate (for example, a full class setting, one-to-one discussions or in small groups).
- 6.2. The RSE curriculum and learning outcomes that pupils are expected to achieve by the end of their secondary education are set out on each school's website.

## **7. Health Education: Physical health and mental well-being**

- 7.1. The Trust wishes to promote pupils' health and well-being by encouraging self-control, their ability to self-regulate and strategies for doing so. This will enable pupils to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. The Trust believes that an integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing will have a positive impact on behaviour and attainment. Health Education will be delivered through a range of subjects.
- 7.2. The Health Education curriculum and learning outcomes that pupils are expected to achieve by the end of their primary education are set out on each school's website.
- 7.3. The Health Education curriculum and learning outcomes that pupils are expected to achieve by the end of their secondary education are set out on each school's website.

## **8. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities**

- 8.1. The Trust will endeavour to ensure that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is accessible for all pupils. We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education may be particularly important for such pupils, for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Teaching will be sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, differentiated and personalised to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages.
- 8.2. Staff will make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage faced by pupils with disabilities and will be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice and the Trust's Special Educational Needs Policy when planning for these subjects. Staff will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information.

## **9. Right to request withdrawal from sex education**

- 9.1. The Trust hopes that parents will feel comfortable with, and understand the importance of, the education provided to their children as described in this policy.
- 9.2. Parents of children in primary schools have the right to withdraw their child from sex education and should state this in writing and send it to the Headteacher.
- 9.3. Parents of children in secondary schools have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education aspects of RSE. Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from sex education in a secondary school should put their request in writing and send it to the Headteacher who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

- 9.4. Before withdrawing or making a request, the Trust strongly urges parents to carefully consider their decision as sex education is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development. Parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships or Health Education or the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the science curriculum.
- 9.5. If a pupil is excused from sex education the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

## **10. Confidentiality and Child Protection**

- 10.1. The Trust hopes to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. All teachers will receive training around confidentiality and should ensure that pupils understand that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. If a child protection issue is disclosed to a member of staff, that member of staff should follow the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures.
- 10.2. If a staff member is approached by a pupil under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:
- ensure that the pupil is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active
  - encourage the pupil to talk to their parent or carer. Pupils may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible
  - decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a member of staff is informed that a pupil under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures.
- 10.3. Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

## **11. Equal opportunities**

- 11.1. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education will be delivered equally to both genders, normally in mixed classes. There are, however, certain topics that may be delivered in single sex groupings e.g. menstruation and personal hygiene.
- 11.2. The Trust has a commitment to ensure that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is relevant to all pupils and is taught in a way that is age and stage appropriate. Pupils are encouraged to openly and freely discuss diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously in accordance with the Trust's Behaviour Policy.

## **12. Complaints**

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Headteacher in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Procedure.