



# RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

## **Safeguarding Team**

Please see the safeguarding page on our website for the latest information about our Safeguarding Staff Team

### **This policy should be read alongside:**

Working together to safeguard children July 2018

Keeping children safe in education 2021

John Port Spencer Academy (SAT) Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## **Included in this policy**

Intent

Implementation

Impact

**Published: September 2020**

**Updated: November 2021**

**To be reviewed: December 2023 (or before)**



## Intent

### Why Do We Teach Relationships and Sex Education?

This academy policy is in line with current regulations from the Department of Education (DfE) on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2019).

Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education are taught at John Port Spencer Academy as statutory subjects.

Relationships and Sex Education make a significant contribution to the academy's legal duties to;

- prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, and
- promote the spiritual, moral, social cultural mental and physical development of students

It is taught in the context of the following aspects of our academy values:

1. **Dignity:** students are to be encouraged to behave in ways that are not damaging to their self-respect.
2. **Integrity:** we reinforce students' ability to make their own choices and be able to resist pressure.
3. **Respect for self and others:** sexuality can be expressed through a range of relationships; exploitation is wrong; what people do in private with mutual consent is their own business, but maintaining self-respect is important.
4. **Responsibility:** All of us have responsibility for our partners and ourselves.
5. **Sensitivity to others:** We accept that the origins of different sexual orientation are not conclusively known, but are generally considered to be biological rather than personal choice. Different cultures have different customs and beliefs and this should be respected even if they differ from our own.
6. **Loyalty and Honesty:** All positive relationships require foundations of trust and honesty that are fundamental to beneficial relationships in all contexts.

Relationships and Sex Education is defined as 'learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health'. This content is delivered in an appropriate way in our academy with regard to the age and stage of students.

The intention of Relationships and Sex Education in our academy is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships and take responsibility for their physical, sexual and emotional health and wellbeing. We recognise the central importance of relationships in supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, academic achievement and future success. We aim to put in the key building blocks of healthy respect.

Our programme also aims to support students in their personal development with regard to attributes such as kindness, integrity, generosity and honesty. These approaches support our wider work of building resilience in our students. We focus on attitudes and values, skills and as well as knowledge and understanding. This will include developing self-esteem, the skills to manage relationships and most importantly keep themselves safe in all their relationships.



Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about relationships and sex, are more likely to be discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

We recognise the impact of social media, the media and the digital world on our children and young people. We aim to deliver an RSE programme that recognises and addresses this to ensure that students know how to keep themselves and their personal information safe.

## Implementation

### RSE Curriculum Content

The DfE recognises five elements to Relationships and Sex Education. These are:

- Families
- Respectful relationships including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

During Key Stage 3 (age 11-14) students will learn about respectful relationships in terms of friendships and platonic relationships. This will be interwoven with our citizenship programme which will also allow students to discuss the root causes of conflict and how positive relationships may be maintained.

Focused sessions during enrichment days will also cover bullying and exploitative friendships, a simple introduction to LGBT issues, aspects of healthy relationships, the importance of equality and online safety.

At Key Stage 4, students will learn about consent, sexual/reproductive health (including STI's), pregnancy, managing risks and Contraceptive choices. Students will be taught about where to get advice on sensitive issues. This will be taught in the context of healthy relationships and how to recognise the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships or all kinds. These themes will be primarily delivered via focused sessions during enrichment days.

Throughout Key Stage 5 (Sixth Form), students will continue to build on the themes already delivered during Years 7 to 11 in the academy. These themes will be primarily delivered via focused sessions during enrichment days.

### RSE Content across the curriculum

Some elements of sex education are statutory. Learning about 'the changing adolescent body' is part of statutory Health Education. National Curriculum Science is also statutory, the following topics relevant to the RSE curriculum will be covered during normal science lessons.

Key Stage 3 and 4:

- teaching about reproduction in humans, for example the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycles, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS.



## Key Stage 4

- the relationship between health and disease
- communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDs)

**Equality**

This academy delivers RSE with regards to the Equality Act 2010 and observance of the protected characteristics of age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership and sexual orientation. We recognise that children have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The academy believes that all people should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs.

To achieve this, the academy's approach to RSE will take account of:

- Girls tend to have a greater access to RSE than boys through the media and at home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and use approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism, misogyny, sexualised behaviour and sexist bullying. We will foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls.
- Some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties, or special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) that result in particular RSE needs at times which we will support. We will ensure that RSE is accessible to all students through high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised. We will also be mindful of preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.
- Different ethnic cultural and religious groups may have different attitudes and beliefs with regard to RSE. The academy will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for and understanding of the views of different ethnic, cultural and religious groups in line with safeguarding and academy's statutory duty to keep students safe and deliver certain elements of the statutory RSE curriculum.
- Some of our students will go on to define themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans (LGBT). Some students may have LGBT parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with LGBT people both now and in the future. Our approach to RSE will reflect this and teaching will be sensitive and age appropriate both in content and approach. This content will be integrated into the programme rather than as a stand-alone lesson or unit. We actively tackle homophobic bullying.
- We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We will take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and deliver the curriculum sensitively and inclusively.

**Provision**

1. This academy has a caring ethos that models and supports positive relationships between all members of the academy community.
2. Within the taught, age-appropriate, aspects of the RSE programme within the delivery of citizenship and whole academy enrichment days.
3. Within Science as stipulated by the national curriculum and/or as negotiated with the PSHE coordinator.
4. Through other curriculum areas for example Drama, English etc.



5. Through assemblies.
6. Through pastoral support.
7. By the provision of appropriate leaflets and other information sources.
8. Via targeted intervention, where appropriate, with vulnerable individuals.
9. Delivery in response to incidents.

## **Teaching Methods, Resources, Training and Monitoring**

All the following elements of teaching methods, resources, training and monitoring are essential elements in providing quality RSE.

### **A Safe Learning Environment**

In order for PSHE or RSE to be conducted safely the following will be in place:

- Group agreements or ground rules are negotiated, explained, and referred to wherever appropriate.
- No one in the classroom will be expected to answer a personal question.
- Distancing techniques such as the use of scenarios, will be used to help to keep students safe. There will be no need for anyone to discuss their own personal issues.
- Confidentiality will be clearly explained. Students will understand how disclosures will be handled.
- Students will be expected to engage and listen during lessons; however, it is accepted that sometimes it is inappropriate for them to be expected to take part in the discussion.
- In most cases, the correct names for body parts will be used.
- The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Care will be taken not to use materials or approaches that may trigger trauma or distress. Students at risk will be identified and arrangements made for them to access the learning in a comfortable way.
- Signposting to sources of support when dealing with sensitive issues

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Teaching and learning best practice will be applied. The academy will expect that all RSE/PSHE sessions meet the same high standard of provision that would be expected in any other subject.

### **Asking and Answering Questions**

We recognise that where young people's questions go unanswered, they may turn to inappropriate sources of information, therefore teachers will attempt to answer student's questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner. Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations, and if necessary, refer to the PSHE coordinator for advice and support.

Teachers will apply the following principles:

1. Clear guidance will be established about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting-group agreement/ground rules will help to achieve this.
2. If a student's question is inappropriate to address the whole class, the teacher will acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.
3. Personal questions should be referred to the ground rules/group agreement.



4. Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that student's discuss issues in a way which encourages thoughtful participation.
5. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk in any way, including sexual abuse or exploitation, the usual safeguarding procedures will be followed.

## **Groupings**

RSE takes place within mixed gender classes or single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant with the student's usual teacher. There may be times when choosing particular mixes of genders may be useful although the vast majority of RSE provision will not require this.

It is important to note that although separated genders may have different activities on occasions the messages and information they receive will be consistent. It will be left to the academy's discretion to make decisions regarding suitable grouping.

## **Resources**

Teaching resources will be selected on the basis of their appropriateness to students and their impact. Care will be taken not to use materials or have discussions that could be 'instructional' e.g. regarding self-harm.

## **Continuity, Progression and Assessment**

Our academy has the same high standards of the quality of students learning in RSE as in other curriculum areas. RSE is delivered through a sequenced planned programme of work delivered through enrichment sessions and holistically through identified opportunities within subject curriculums.

The adoption of a whole academy approach to the planning and delivery of outcomes ensures students develop the required knowledge, skills and understanding. The curriculum is informed by needs assessment of students existing knowledge, experience and understanding.

The elements of RSE that form part of the Science curriculum are assessed in accordance with the requirements of the national curriculum. Learning from other elements of RSE is assessed as part of the PSHE provision and builds on existing academy systems. Formative and summative assessment carried out within RSE sessions will inform student progress and feed back into the further development of RSE delivery.

## **Personnel and Training**

There is a PSHE coordinator who is regularly trained and updated in this fast-moving subject area. They are responsible for overseeing the RSE carried out throughout the academy.

RSE is delivered by form tutors, citizenship teachers and outside provision. The academy is committed to ensuring that everyone involved with teaching, or supporting the teaching of RSE receives appropriate and ongoing professional development in order to maintain a whole academy consistency and high standards for the children/young people in our care.

All new staff will receive a digital copy of the RSE policy.



## Parental engagement in RSE

We recognise the prime role of parents/carers in the development of their child's understanding about relationships and sex. We work in active partnership with parents/carers in the development and review of RSE.

The academy will ensure that parents/carers are:

- made aware of the academy's approach and rationale for RSE through the policy
- involved in the review of the RSE policy
- made aware of the academy's PSHE curriculum
- encouraged them to support their child is learning at home through shared learning activities, if appropriate.

## Right to Withdraw

Parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons delivered outside the science curriculum. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of RSE that are taught in national curriculum Science.

If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision. In the event of a request to withdraw we will document this process and ensure a record is kept.

Once a student is three terms away from their sixteenth birthday they have a right to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn. Where this is the case we will arrange to provide them with sex education during one of those terms.

## Impact

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme is regularly monitored and evaluated by the PSHE coordinator to ensure impact. This takes place through a variety of methods, including learning walks, observation, scrutiny of annotated lesson plans, and student feedback. The views of the students and teachers who deliver the programme, will be used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis. The needs assessment is built into the lessons and will also inform any changes to the curriculum.

### Dissemination of the policy

This policy has been approved by governors. This document is freely available to the entire academy community on the academy website.