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Relationship & Sex Education Policy V3

Sheep Dip Lane Academy

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Curriculum Intent

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Aims

The aims of relationship and sex education (RSE) at our academy are to:

- Provide a secure, sensitive and caring framework in which sensitive learning and discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Provide information which is easy to understand, relevant and appropriate for the needs, age and maturity of the pupils

- Encourage the use of correct vocabulary
- Foster self-worth and awareness, together with a sense of moral responsibility
- Help the children to acquire and practise important life skills such as critical thinking, decision making, communication and assertiveness
- Ensure that sex education is available to all children regardless of gender, ability, cultural or religious background in line with the academy's policy on equal opportunities
- Form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security.
- Recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.
- Teach pupils about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support our mental wellbeing.
- Contribute to the prevention of abuse and protection of children, by teaching the knowledge they need to be safe and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse.
- Be prepared for the physiological and emotional changes they will go through during puberty, where possible before these occur. Understanding that these are natural and normal changes.

Sheep Dip Lane Academy exists to provide the focus for our children to develop to their full potential, as individuals and as members of the academy and wider community, in a secure, caring and happy environment. Children, parents, staff and governors work in partnership for the benefit of all.

As an academy, we seek continually to enrich the lives of those entrusted to our care through a broad and balanced curriculum, designed to meet the needs of each child, enabling them to acquire the skills, attitudes and values necessary for life. By regular review, we evaluate progress and develop strategies on the basis of sound educational practice and moral values.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is an integral part of our personal, social and health education programme, an area which is considered important throughout our academy.

We believe that RSE is an ongoing process, which should start in the home and continue at our academy. This process should happen in partnership with parents. A positive effort has and will continue to be made to inform and involve parents.

The academy's programme of RSE will be embedded within the academy's PSHE curriculum and will help children to respect themselves and others. The programme is tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of the children and is delivered by the academy staff and invited professionals.

Rationale

The Relationship Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 Children and Social Work Act 2017 make Relationship Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education in England.

We have based our academy's RSE policy on the DFEE guidance document 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (ref DFEE 0116/2000). In this document, sex education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and education development. It is about understanding the importance of family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care'. Sex education is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our

academy. While we use sex education to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

Objectives

RSE teaching will be delivered via two areas of the curriculum. Through national curriculum Science/PSHE where:

- Sex education at the academy will be developmental and age appropriate.
- Pupils will be taught about the nature of the human body and how it grows and changes.
- Sex education will be taught within the context of relationships and family life.

At Key Stage 1:

- Children should know that humans develop at different rates.
- Animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce.
- To recognise and compare the main external parts of bodies of the humans.
- That humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults.
- To recognise the similarities between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity.

At Key Stage 2:

- Begin to know about and have some understanding of the physical, emotional and social changes, which take place at puberty.
- Know that there are many different kinds of friendship; be able to talk about friends with important adults.
- That the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction.
- The main stages of the human life cycle.

Statutory requirements

SRE is not compulsory in academies. However, Academies are required to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

At **Sheep Dip Lane Academy** we teach SRE as set out in this policy.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with governors and staff. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance

2. Staff consultation – all academy staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

Definitions

Relationships Education (RE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up. It is inclusive of all types of families, to help children understand about loving and caring relationships of all types. It should equip children with the information, skills and positive values to have safe relationships, to understand their bodies and to empower them to know they have choice. This subject can support children to develop resilience and to know how and when to ask for help.

Sex Education (SE) provides a safe environment for children to have a factual, age appropriate introduction to human reproduction and to ask questions related to this topic. It should enable children to access a safe source of information. Sex Education in this school will always form part of a broader scheme of work presented in conjunction with RE above, therefore will be referred to as **Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)**.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Delivery of RSE

We teach sex education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education teaching in our personal, social and health education PSHE curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example science).

Teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the academies teaching, we follow that guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Years 5 and 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

Our school works with BigTalk Education, an award-winning team of specialist RSE facilitators led by Lynnette Smith, who is the Chair of the Sex Education Forum's Advisory Group (the SEF is part of the National Children's Bureau). BigTalk Education's *Growing Up Safe: Whole School Approach* (GUS programme) has been recognised by the Family Planning Association and Children and Young People Now Awards as a Finalist in their Safeguarding Award.

The BigTalk team then deliver to each class within school, for more details please see details appendix 1.

Our teaching staff observe the BigTalk Education RE and RSE lessons as part of their CPD programme to ensure they can reinforce the lesson content and answer any follow up questions throughout the academic year.

In addition to this RE & RSE topics will be included in assemblies, circle times, small group and whole class sessions.

We inform all parents and carers when the children in Years 5 and 6 will be doing SRE education lessons. All are also welcome to view the programme of lessons, ask questions about any issues and how they are taught, and to see the materials the academy uses in its teaching.

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by trained RSE / health professionals.

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported with developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work

These skills are taught within the context of family life.

The Role of Parents

The academy is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our academy through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- Inform parents about the academy's policy and practice.
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child.
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the academy.

If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the Principal and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their children to participate in. The academy always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard, however many aspects of the lesson are part of the Science curriculum which is statutory and PSHE/SRE is soon to become statutory.

The Role of other Members of the Community

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the academy nurse, give us valuable support with our sex education programme.

Confidentiality

Discussion will be encouraged at all times.

Ground rules for discussion excluding personal questioning of staff or pupils will be established.

We shall attempt to deal with questions in a sensitive, open, frank and matter of fact way.

Questions concerning homosexuality, sexually transmitted diseases and contraception will be answered if raised.

Difficult or explicit questions do not have to be answered directly. Teachers/professionals will use their own discretion in these situations.

Most groups will be mixed age and gender but if felt more appropriate, single sex or age groups may be formed.

Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will deal with it as a matter of urgency. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Principal. The Principal will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (see also Child Protection Policy).

Equal Opportunities

Pupils will have the opportunity to participate in RSE. However, parents have the right to withdraw their children from some of the curriculum after discussion with the Principal and if the academy is notified in writing.

The governing body has wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010, to ensure that no pupil(s) are discriminated against because of their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, educational needs, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity or home circumstances (e.g. looked after children).

The *Growing Up Safe* programme is autism friendly and has been designed to be inclusive and accessible to most children including those whose first language is not English. During these lessons any pupils with additional needs will be identified by their teacher and every provision made to help them join in during the RE/RSE lessons.

If a pupil is unable to take part in their usual class group for any reason, every endeavour will be made for them to attend a session best matched to their ability level.

Up to and including year 4, all lessons will be co-educational, however in Years 5 and 6 these will be separated by gender (please note that lesson content is the same). For any children identifying as transgender, school will liaise with the child's guardian to determine which group the child would be most comfortable with.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

We recognise that because effective RSE may alert children to what is appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour, there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. All staff are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and will report the disclosure to the designated person for child protection immediately.

Sexually Active Pupils There are extremely rare occasions when a primary-aged child, who is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity, approaches an adult. If this occurs in our academy, it will be viewed as a child protection issue. The designated member of staff will follow Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and seek advice from the relevant agency.

All staff members are aware of child protection procedures (see policy).

Roles and responsibilities

Governors

Governors will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the academy, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 7).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents' right to withdraw

As school is legally obligated to provide pupils with Relationship Education (RE), parents do not have a right to withdraw their children from RE lessons.

Parents do however, have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Principal. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RSE.

Staff Support and Development

It is appreciated that some staff may feel less comfortable with this area of the curriculum. All staff will be supported with appropriate training and support and, if preferred, alternative staff or visiting professionals may be asked to deliver the curriculum.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Mrs. A Parkhurst (Vice Principal and Staff Governor) and Mrs. M Steeper (PSHE lead) through lesson drop-ins, learning walks and bookwork scrutiny.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy was written in conjunction with BigTalk Education Ltd. a social enterprise who work with schools across England supporting in the delivery of RE and RSE, curriculum and policy guidance. BigTalk Education review curriculum on an annual basis to ensure that any new developments in international RSE best practice, emerging risks or other safeguarding dangers are reflected in the education provided to children to keep them safe, healthy and happy.

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved and ratified by governors.

Date of Review November 2025

Signed: Principal: Mrs F Parish



Signed: Governor: Mr C Lambert

