

Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Secondary Schools Policy

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1. Rationale

In Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. A key part of this relates to relationships and health education, which must be delivered to every primary-aged pupil.

Relationships education focuses on giving pupils the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. Health education focuses on equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.

We understand our responsibility to deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate and evidence-based relationships, sex and health curriculum for all our pupils. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships, sex and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered.

Our schools seek to ensure that the RSHE curriculum protects, informs and nurtures all pupils. 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, recognising that the distinction can be easily blurred and that there needs to be discernment about the way this is taught. We teach RSHE within a moral (but not moralistic) framework.

2. Aims

This policy supports a whole school approach to RSE within the curriculum, and throughout the life of the Trust and its community. It is consistent with current legislative frameworks and statutory guidance.

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) in Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive 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 consider how to ensure that they treat themselves and others, at all times and in all contexts, with dignity and respect
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

3. Definition of terms

For the purpose of this document:

- a. Members, Trustees/Directors and Governors are referred to as Trustees;
- b. The Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust is referred to as The Trust and refers to all schools within the Trust;
- c. School or Academy refers to any one of the schools or academies within the Dartmoor

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Multi Academy Trust;

- d. Staff refers to all staff working at any one of the schools within the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust;
- e. Pupils/children refers to all those being educated or on site at any one of the schools within the Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust.

4. Statutory Requirements

As a Multi Academy Trust our secondary schools must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

In our Trust, we teach RSE as set out in this policy. This policy is associated with the PSHE Policy and the PSHE Programme of Study.

Schools must have regard to the statutory guidance, and where they depart from those parts of the guidance which state that they should (or should not) do something they will need to have good reasons for doing so.

The policy must also be applied within the framework of other relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010.

5. Policy Development

Our school policies have all been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- a. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- b. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- c. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- d. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
- e. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with Trustees and ratified

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6. Principles and Values

The Trust believes:

- that RSE should be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life;
- RSE is an entitlement for all young people;
- in encouraging every pupil to contribute to their community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn;
- RSE should support and promote family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness;
- that family is a broad concept; there is not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches;
- in encouraging pupils and teachers to share and respect other's views.
- in generating an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment;
- in recognising that parents are key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up;
- that we must aim to work in partnership with parents and pupils, consulting them about the content of programmes;
- that the wider community has much to offer and aims to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

7. What is Relationships and Sex Education?

As a Trust we value diversity and foster mutual respect, modelling and inspiring attributes in pupils such as respect, courtesy and honesty. These underpin and inform the relationships we have, between pupils and between pupils and adults.

- 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.
- It involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.
- RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

RSE is taught within the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum and some content may also be delivered through the Religious Education (Beliefs and Values), Physical Education (PE) and Computing and IT curriculums.

In the secondary phase RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families and people who care for me

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- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Education

There is statutory guidance on the importance of teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Physical health and mental wellbeing will play a key role in delivering our PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) and will be enhanced by our Physical Education and Science curriculums. The strands included in statutory Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Education are:

- mental wellbeing; internet safety & harms;
- physical health and fitness; healthy eating;
- drugs, alcohol and tobacco;
- health and prevention; basic first aid;
- and changing adolescent body.

8. Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is developed in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

9. Delivery of RSE

PSHE sessions are timetabled into the school week and delivered by teaching staff.

Delivery of the RSHE content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Teachers will liaise with staff, SENDCo and parents when necessary to adapt the content and resources to a level suitable for individual SEND pupils.

10. Inclusion

- Ethnic and Cultural Groups** - We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups.
- Pupils with Special Needs** - We will ensure that all young people receive relationships and sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

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- c. **Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation** - We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that relationships and sex education is relevant to them.

11. Roles and responsibilities

- a. **Trustees** - will approve the RSE policy and hold the Principals to account for its implementation.
- b. The **Principals** - are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 11).
- c. **Staff** - are responsible for:
 - i. Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
 - ii. Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
 - iii. Monitoring progress
 - iv. Responding to the needs of individual pupils
 - v. Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] 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.
- d. **Pupils** - are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

12. Parents' right to withdraw

In the secondary phase, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. There is no right of opt out from the statutory relationships education components.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education and they will be supervised but alternative teacher supervision, one to one teaching and/or admission to another teaching group may not be practical, possible or feasible.

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13. Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and are required to report all disclosures. In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- a. This matter will be reported immediately to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) via the online reporting system (CPOMS).
- b. The young person will be strongly encouraged wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice.
- c. The young person will be properly advised about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.
- d. The DSL will give due regard to satisfying themselves that no young person of any age is involved in a relationship that is potentially coercive or exploitative. Where this is thought to be the case, child protection measures will be taken.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that they cannot ever promise confidentiality.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that they cannot ever promise confidentiality.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

14. Training

Staff who teach RSE are trained in the delivery of RSE as part of their professional qualification training and/or induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Principal/Lead Teacher of RSE will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

15. Impact

Assessment methods include;

- assessment is built into the RSE programme to inform planning
- summative assessment at the end of the RSE unit
- pupil self-assessment is used where appropriate
- identify pupils who have exceeded or fallen short of the module objectives and those that have achieved it

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- teachers will keep a note of pupils who have missed some or the entire module due to absence from school

The delivery of RSE is monitored by a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the quality of education team through: e.g. lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil voice

16. Policy Circulation

- a. This Policy will be published on the Trust's website
- b. This Policy will be circulated to every Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee by sending an email to the link on the Trust's website on an annual basis and when each new Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee joins the Trust.
- c. The Trustees, in consultation with the Local Governing Bodies, are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

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17. Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class/Form	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	