



Sex and Relationships Policy

Approved by The Youth Engagement Schools Trust: May 2024
Date for Policy review: May 2025

FOREWORD

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The key decisions on these subjects have been informed by a thorough engagement process, including a public call for evidence that received over 23,000 responses from parents, young people, schools and experts and a public consultation where over 40,000 people contacted the Department for Education.

The depth and breadth of views is clear, and there are understandable and legitimate areas of contention. Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and have told us that they see building on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We agree with this principle and congratulate the many schools delivering outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of their pupils. We are determined that the subjects must be deliverable and give schools flexibility to shape their curriculum according to the needs of their pupils and communities.

In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise. 5 All of this content should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils' ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.

This should be complemented by development of personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty. We have endeavoured to ensure the content is proportionate and deliverable. Whilst we are not mandating content on financial education or careers, we want to support the high-quality teaching of these areas in all schools as part of a comprehensive programme, which complements the national curriculum where appropriate and meets the ambitions of the Careers Strategy. We know that many schools will choose to teach the compulsory content within a wider programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education or similar. Schools are encouraged to continue to do so, if this is right for them, and build on established, high quality programmes.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.

RATIONALE

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) has a key part to play in the personal, social and spiritual development of all young people. It begins informally in the home with parents and carers long before any formal education takes place at school. A young person's entitlement to SRE is enshrined within the terms of the Education Act (1996), Section 351-(1). All maintained schools are required to offer a curriculum which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society; and
- Prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Though some aspects of sex education are taught within National Curriculum Science, most SRE takes place within Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) in primary schools and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE education) in secondary schools. At The Raise Academy this will be delivered through specialist led sessions by in house members of staff and visiting partner agencies in PHSRE.

In its Sex and Relationship Education Guidance for schools (DfEE 2021), the DfE defines that the teaching of SRE is designed to 'To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy.'

By the end of primary school, the DfE (2021) expect the following

<p>Families and people who care for me Pupils should know Pupils should know whom they do not know.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. • the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. • that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. • that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. • that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. • how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe,
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	<p>and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.</p>
<p>Caring friendships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.
<p>Respectful relationships</p>	<p>know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • the conventions of courtesy and manners. • the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect

	<p>by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. • what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. • the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. • that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. • the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. • how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. • how information and data is shared and used online.
Being safe	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). • about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. • that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences

	<p>between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. • how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. • how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. • how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. • where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources
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By the end of secondary school, the DfE (2021) expect the following

<p>Families Pupils should know</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there are different types of committed, stable relationships. • how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children. • what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony. • why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into. • the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships. • the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
<p>Respectful relationships, including friendships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship. <p>28</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). • that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs. • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the

	<p>impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control. • what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable. • the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.
<p>Online and media</p>	<p>their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. • not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them. • what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. • the impact of viewing harmful content. • that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively

	<p>affect how they behave towards sexual partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail. • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
<p>Being safe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. • how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
<p>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship. • that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the

potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.

- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

The Guidance identifies three main elements in a balanced SRE programme: attitudes and values; personal and social skills; and knowledge and understanding.

THE AIMS OF SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION

Attitudes and values:

- To consider social and moral dilemmas
- To value and respect different types of relationships
- To foster respect and responsibility for oneself and for others
- To clarify myths and misconceptions
- To address stereotyping

Personal and social skills:

- To acquire knowledge and skills necessary to develop successful relationships
- To promote understanding of appropriate behaviour in public and in private
- To encourage self-awareness
- To develop decision-making skills, including critical thinking, awareness of choices and how to act on decisions made
- To develop communication skills with peers, parents and other adults

Knowledge and understanding

- To know the physical and emotional changes associated with human development and growth
- To know what help is available and how to access it
- To provide opportunities to ask questions and clarify ideas in a safe environment
- To provide appropriate information that is relevant to the needs, age and maturity of the students
- To improve awareness and understanding of the opposite sex and of sexuality
- To be able to recognise, acknowledge and deal positively with emotions

BACKGROUND

The Legal Framework

Education Act 1996

The law relating to sex education is contained in the 1996 Education Act. This is a consolidating Act which pulls together, amongst other Acts, the whole of the 1944 Education Act and the 1993 Education Act. The provisions relating to sex education as they appear in the Education Act 1996 are as follows:

- All maintained schools must offer a curriculum which - promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society: and prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- In maintained primary and primary special schools, governors must decide whether and at what stage to introduce sex education over and above that provided in National Curriculum Science and must keep an up to date statement of the school's provision, which must be available to parents.
- In maintained secondary schools, secondary special schools and special schools with secondary age students, sex education (including education about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, STIs) must be provided for all students. The governing body must have in place a written policy on sex education, which must be available to parents. The newest statutory information, [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) (2022) can also be accessed via this link.
- In all maintained schools, sex education must be provided in such a manner as to encourage young people to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life.
- Parents in all maintained schools have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of sex education, except those areas that are included in the national curriculum programme of study for science.
- In voluntary-aided schools, the governing body must decide whether and at what stage to include sex education over and above that contained in National Curriculum science. As with maintained schools, they must keep a written statement of their policy and make it available to parents/carers on request.

Education and inspections Act (2006)

- Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act places a new duty on school governing bodies in England to promote children's well-being as well as their academic achievement. 'Well-being' is defined, in accordance with the Children Act 2004, as: physical and mental health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education, training and recreation; the contribution made by (a child) to society; and social and economic well-being.

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

The Sexual Offences Act aims to clarify what constitutes a crime of a sexual nature against children, young people and adults. The Act does not limit students' entitlement to PSHE. Staff giving information or advice with the purpose of protecting a young person from pregnancy, STIs, protecting their physical safety or promoting their well-being, will not be guilty of an offence.

Secondary schools

Secondary schools should use the non-statutory programme of study for Personal Well-being (Revised Secondary Curriculum: Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education QCA 2007), together with the **statutory requirements** within the National Curriculum Science Order, to plan a holistic SRE programme. The key concepts which underpin the programme of study for personal well-being are:

- Personal identities
- Healthy lifestyles
- Risk

RELATED GUIDANCE

The newest statutory information, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk) (2022) can also be accessed via this link.

Sex and relationship education, healthy lifestyles and financial capability: Teachers' handbook and units of work (QCA 2005). The materials provide guidance on planning and delivering work around these aspects of PSHE.

POLICY

Statutory requirements and good practice

All maintained and voluntary-aided schools are required to have an up to date policy that outlines the provision for SRE (Education Act 1996). The DfE advises that 'all schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships Education and RSE. Schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy. Schools should ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve'. An SRE policy can stand alone, or be part of the school's PSHE and Citizenship policy. Once completed, the policy should be referred to in the school prospectus and made widely available to students, parents/carers and staff (e.g. via the school website and/or intranet).

Role of governors

The governing body is ultimately responsible for the PSD and Citizenship policy of the academy and must be involved in the development, monitoring and review of the SRE policy and programme. Academies should include governors in whole-staff training sessions and discussions whenever practical.

Purpose of the policy

- To ensure that staff are aware of what the academy will deliver and how it will be done
- To clarify the values that underpin PSD/SRE and form part of the school's ethos
- To provide a tool to inform parents/carers of SRE/PSD
- To create a starting point for staff to receive training, support and resources
- To ensure links with pastoral care

Aims of our SRE Programme

- To encourage students to have due regard for moral issues and the value of family life
- To promote the development of self-esteem and a positive self-image
- To help students to explore and develop their attitudes, values and emotions
- To promote tolerance, sensitivity, respect and consideration for others

- To help students to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner
- To empower students to make informed and positive choices about their behaviour
- To help students to acquire a sound knowledge of and respect for, their bodies and human development
- To equip students with the skills needed to assess situations and protect themselves from any form of abuse

Equal Opportunities

All students have access to the SRE programme. Most teaching takes place in mixed sex groups, with provision for single sex discussion groups where appropriate.

Organisation and Planning

- **Who teaches SRE?** Learning mentors, Teachers, Specialist LA providers, in house staff
- **Where SRE is taught?** Whole School
- Staff professional development and support: Access to LA training when available
- **Teaching methods and approaches**, including the involvement of health professionals and visitors: delivery will be led by staff from The Raise Academy. External staff will be accessed for individual lessons or whole class lessons as and when deemed appropriate
- Specific arrangements for students with special needs and disabilities
- Delivery can be differentiated as and when deemed appropriate.
- Students' learning will be assessed, recorded and reported by class teachers
- Procedures for reviewing effectiveness of the programme (evaluation) will take place periodically with the lead staff member and Senior Leadership Team
- Pastoral support and links to services in the wider community

Specific issues

Any matters relating to any of the issues cited below are to be immediately passed to the designated Child Protection Officer or member of the Senior Leadership Team

These might include:

- Child protection and confidentiality
- Handling sensitive issues
- Procedures for supporting any members of the school community infected or affected by HIV.

Working with Parents/Carers

From September 2020 Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn for some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. A copy of the withdrawal request can be accessed in Appendix one at the end of this document.

We provide parents /carers with an opportunity to view the SRE resources we use in The Raise Academy and support them with any questions they may have with aspects of the SRE programme.

Parents and carers have opportunities to talk to teachers at any time and formal structured conversations take place twice a year. Progress in individual subject areas are formally fed back to parents and carers in annual school reports in the summer term.

Key Guidance Documents

DfEE (2000) Sex and Relationship Education Guidance

DCSF (2007) Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance

DfEE/QCA (1999), The National Curriculum: Handbook for primary teachers in England: Key Stages 1 and 2, PSHE

DCSF/QCA (2007) The Revised National Curriculum for secondary teachers in England: Key Stages 3 and 4, PSHEE – Personal Well-being

DfES (2005) Every Child Matters - Change for Children in Schools

National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy

QCA (2005) PSHE at key stages 1-4: Guidance on assessment, recording and reporting

Teaching Resources

There are many published resources for sex and relationship education and a number of internet sites which provide lesson materials. As with other PSHE resources, any materials should be selected on the basis that they:

- Reflect the academy's values and beliefs
- Are sensitive to age, gender, ability, faith, sexuality, ethnicity and culture, as appropriate
- Offer a range of activities in which active learning plays a major part, maximising student participation
- Give accurate and balanced facts and do not aim to shock or horrify
- Identify learning outcomes
- Provide suggestions/opportunities for assessment
- Offer teachers guidance on using the materials

Useful websites for curriculum resources & young people

www.need2know.gov.uk

www.l8r.uk.net

www.talktofrank.com

HEALTH INFORMATION WEBSITES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE:

www.ruthinking.com

www.teenagehealthfreak.org

USEFUL ORGANISATIONS:

Avert

International charity providing information on HIV/AIDS. Its website includes sections aimed specifically at young people.

www.avert.org.uk

Brook

Confidential sexual health advice and contraception for young people up to 25

www.brook.org.uk

Centre for HIV and Sexual Health

The centre provides a variety of resources, including booklets for parents/carers on talking and listening to their children.

www.nhs.uk

Childline

Helpline for children and young people in danger or distress. Telephone counselling for any child with any problem. 24-hour support, advice and referrals.

www.childline.org.uk

Contact a Family

Provides support, advice and information to families across the UK. with a disabled child www.cafamily.org.uk

Department of Health

Health information for practitioners and websites for young people

www.dh.gov.uk

www.need2know.gov.uk

FPA (formerly Family Planning Association)

Provides resources and training for SRE

www.fpa.org.uk

Healthy Schools

Website to support the National Healthy School Programme. Provides extensive information on all aspects of health and well-being.

www.healthyschools.gov.uk

National Children's Bureau (NCB)

NCB is a charitable organisation which acts as an umbrella body for organisations working with children and young people in England and Northern Ireland, including the Sex Education Forum (see below). Through working in partnership, sharing knowledge, resources and services they aim to create a powerful, authoritative and influential voice to improve the lives of children and young people.

www.ncb.org.uk

Ofsted www.ofsted.gov.uk

Family Lives

A freephone helpline offering support and information to anyone parenting a child. It also runs parenting courses.

www.familylives.org.uk

PSHE Association

The association provides a central support network for teachers of PSHE, giving them a focal point to receive advice, gather and share examples of good practice and promote existing guidance.

www.pshe-association.org.uk

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)

QCA is committed to building a world-class education and training framework. They regulate, develop and modernise the curriculum, assessments, examinations and qualifications. Includes guidance for teachers on effective Sex and Relationship Education

www.qca.org.uk

Sex Education Forum (SEF)

The SEF provides comprehensive information and support for SRE and a telephone information line. Its website offers a number of free resources and factsheets to download.

www.ncb.org.uk/sef

Stonewall

Stonewall is an organisation which campaigns for equal rights for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals. One campaign focuses on challenging homophobic bullying in schools.

www.stonewall.org.uk

Tacade

This site provides information about a range of publications, training and consultancy products and services that aim to enable children and young people to achieve positive changes in their knowledge, attitudes, abilities, choices and behaviour.

www.tacade.com

Teachernet

DCSF website Includes resources for teachers on alcohol and drug education.

www.teachernet.gov.uk

Halton Special Education Needs & Disabilitys Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

If you need advice, guidance or support on any SEND issues that are affecting you.

Parents of children with SEND or young people with SEND (age 16 to 25), can contact SENDIASS if they need information advice and support about their

education. SENDIASS provide impartial and confidential information and support.

SENDIASS do not make decisions for parents or young people, – they give you the information you need to be able to make your own, informed decisions.

APPENDIX ONE

The Raise Academy
Naylor Road
Widnes
WA8 OBS

Dear

I understand that it is my right to withdraw my child from some or all elements of the sex education curriculum.

I therefore request that my child.....
is withdrawn from:

- Some []
- or,
- All []

elements of study. I understand that a member of staff from The Raise Academy will contact me to ensure clarity.

Kind regards,

Signature of Parent/Carer.....

Printed Name of Parent/Carer.....