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## Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

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## **Statement of intent**

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At Ash Meadow School, we understand that students 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 student. Schools also have the option to decide whether students are taught sex education.

Relationship's education focusses on giving students the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. Health education focusses on equipping students 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 students. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships, sex and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered.

## **Legal framework**

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This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Section 80A of the Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2013) 'Science programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'
- DfE (2021) Keeping Children Safe in Education

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy: Students
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Visitor Policy

## **Roles and responsibilities**

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The Head of School is responsible for:

- Ensuring all students make progress in achieving their expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the curriculum is well led, effectively managed and well planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all students with SEND.
- Providing clear information for parents on subject content and their rights to request that their children are withdrawn.
- Making sure the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.
- Ensuring that parents are fully informed of this policy.
- Reviewing requests from parents to withdraw their children from the subjects.

- Discussing requests for withdrawal with parents.
- Organising alternative education for students, where necessary, that is appropriate and purposeful.
- Reporting to the governing board on the effectiveness of this policy.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The PSHE Lead is responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of the subjects.
- Ensuring the subjects are age-appropriate and high-quality.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the subjects.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to the relationships, sex and health curriculum.
- Ensuring the relationships, sex and health curriculum is inclusive and accessible for all students.
- Working with other subject leaders to ensure the relationships, sex and health curriculum complements, but does not duplicate, the content covered in the national curriculum.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the Head of School.

The appropriate teachers are responsible for:

- Delivering a high-quality and age-appropriate relationships, sex and health curriculum in line with statutory requirements.
- Using a variety of teaching methods and resources to provide an engaging curriculum that meets the needs of all students.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the programme.
- Modelling positive attitudes to relationships, sex and health education.
- Responding to any safeguarding concerns in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Acting in accordance with planning, monitoring and assessment requirements for the subjects.

In line with this policy, the teachers who will be delivering relationships, sex and health education are outlined below:

Name	Job title
Alicia Highton	PSHE Lead

## Organisation of the curriculum

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Every school is required to deliver statutory relationships education and health education.

For the purpose of this policy, “**relationships and sex education**” is defined as teaching students about healthy, respectful relationships, focussing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online, as well as developing an understanding of human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

For the purpose of this policy, “**health education**” is defined as teaching students about physical health and mental wellbeing, focussing on recognising the link between the two and being able to make healthy lifestyle choices. It is also defined about how they can make good decisions about their own health and well-being, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

For the purpose of this policy, “**parents**” is defined as parents, and carers who look after our students in our residential care provision.

The delivery of the relationships education and health education coincide with one another and will be delivered as part of the school’s PSHE curriculum.

The relationships and health curriculum has been organised in line with the statutory requirements outlined in the DfE (2019) ‘Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education’ guidance.

The relationships and health curriculum considers the views of teachers, students and parents. We are dedicated to ensuring our curriculum meets the needs of the whole-school community.

The relationships and health curriculum is informed by issues in the school and wider community to ensure it is tailored to students’ needs.

We consult with parents, students and staff in the following ways:

- Questionnaires and surveys
- Telephone calls
- Meetings
- Newsletters and letters
- Consent forms
- Training sessions

Any parent, teacher or student wishing to provide feedback about the curriculum can do so at any time during the academic year by:

- Emailing the PSHE Lead – [alicia.highton@brightfuturescare.co.uk](mailto:alicia.highton@brightfuturescare.co.uk)

The school has organised a curriculum that is age-appropriate for students within each year group, based on the views of teachers, parents and students.

When organising the curriculum, the religious backgrounds of all students will be considered, so that the topics that are covered are taught appropriately.

## **Consultation with parents**

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The school understands the important role parents play in enhancing their children's understanding of relationships, sex and health. Similarly, we also understand how important parents' views are in shaping the curriculum.

The school works closely with parents by establishing open communication – all parents are consulted in the development and delivery of the curriculum, as outlined in this policy.

Parents are provided with the following information:

- The content of the relationships, sex and health curriculum
- The delivery of the relationships, sex and health curriculum, including what is taught in each year group
- The legalities surrounding withdrawing their child from the subjects
- The resources that will be used to support the curriculum

The school aims to build positive relationships with parents by inviting them into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help parents in managing conversations with their children on the issues covered by the curriculum.

Parents are consulted in the review of the curriculum and this policy, and are encouraged to provide their views at any time.

### **Key stages 3 and 4**

The majority of the RSE and health education curriculum will be delivered through PSHE education, with statutory elements taught via the science curriculum.

The RSE and PSHE Lead will work closely with their colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum complements and does not duplicate the content covered in national curriculum subjects.

The curriculum has been developed in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance.

The school will consider the context and views of the wider local community when developing the curriculum to ensure it is reflective of issues in the local area.

The school will consider the religious background of all students when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

The RSE and Health Education curriculum is informed by topical issues in the school and wider community to ensure it is tailored to students' needs. For example, if there was a local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections, our curriculum would be tailored to address this issue.

## Relationships education overview

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### Families and people who care for me

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- That families are important for them 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, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- 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 children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.

Students will also have a basic understanding of 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 recognise this in others' relationships.
- How to seek help or advice if needed, including reporting concerns about others.

### **Caring friendships and Respectful relationships, including friendships**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- 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, but 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.
- How to manage conflict.
- How to manage different situations and how to seek help from others if needed.

### **Respectful relationships**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
- Which 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 wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
- About the different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying to an adult, and how to seek help.
- What a stereotype is, and how they can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- 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 relationships.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- How stereotypes, particularly those based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage, e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour.
- That in school and 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 impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to seek help.
- The types of behaviour in relationships that can be criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010, and that everyone is unique and equal.

## **Online relationships**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including 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, even when we are anonymous.
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online.
- How to recognise harmful content and contact online, and how to report these.
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information.
- The risks associated with people they have never met.
- How information and data is shared and used online.

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, and that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts.
- About online risks, including that material shared with another person 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 they receive.
- 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 affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties, including jail.

## **Being safe**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- 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.
- 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 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) who they do not know.
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves and 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 seek advice, for example, from their family, their school and other sources.

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- 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 – this includes online.

### **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- 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 and 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 both men and women.
- The 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 enjoy intimacy without sex.

- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, their effectiveness and options available.
- The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy, with legally and medically 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) are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex and the importance of 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.

### **Relationships education**

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The school is free to determine, within the statutory curriculum content outlined in this policy, what students are taught according to their age and understanding.

The school always considers the development of students when deciding what will be taught.

The school plans a progressive curriculum, such that topics are built upon prior knowledge taught in previous years as they progress through school to provide a smooth transition to their next class.

### **Health education overview**

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The focus at primary level is teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing.

#### **Mental wellbeing**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- That there is a normal range of emotions, e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and nervousness.
- The scale of emotions that humans experience in response to different experiences and situations.
- How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.

- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, and voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- How isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important they discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), extending to who in school they should speak to if they are worried about themselves or others.
- That it is common to experience mental ill health and, for the many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

### **Internet safety and harms**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- That for most people, the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- About the benefits of rationing time spent online.
- The risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices.
- The impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others.
- How to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
- The importance of keeping personal information private.
- Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age-restricted.
- That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- How to be a discerning consumer of information online, including understanding that information (inclusive of that from search engines) is ranked, selected and targeted.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

### **Physical health and fitness**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.

- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this, for example by walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile, or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
- How and when to seek support, including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

### **Healthy eating**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- What constitutes a healthy diet, including an understanding of calories and other nutritional content.
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating, including obesity, and other behaviours, e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health.

### **Drugs alcohol and tobacco**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking, if appropriate.

### **Health and prevention**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss or unexplained changes to the body.
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria and viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of hand washing.
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.

### **Basic first aid**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

## **Changing adolescent body**

By the end of key stage 2, students will have experienced and have some understanding of:

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- About menstrual wellbeing and key facts relating to the menstrual cycle.

The physical health and mental wellbeing curriculum will continue to develop students' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section.

## **Mental wellbeing**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- That happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- Common types of mental ill health, e.g. anxiety and depression.
- How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

## **Internet safety and harms**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online, over-reliance on online relationships, the risks related to online gambling, how information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
- How to identify harmful behaviours online, including bullying, abuse or harassment, and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

## **Physical health and fitness**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health.
- About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

## **Healthy eating**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

## **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use and serious mental health conditions.
- The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
- The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco, the benefits of quitting and how to access the support to do so.

## **Health and prevention**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.



- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- The benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

### **Basic first aid**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- Basic treatments for common injuries.
- Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

### **Changing adolescent body**

By the end of key stage 4, students will have experienced and have some understanding that:

- Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

### **Health education per key stage**

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The school is free to determine, within the statutory curriculum content outlined in this policy, what students are taught during each year group.

The school always considers the age, understanding and development of our students when deciding what will be taught in each class.

The school plans a progressive curriculum, such that topics are built upon prior knowledge taught in previous years as they progress through school to provide a smooth transition to their next stage in life.

### **Sex education**

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All students must be taught the aspects of sex education outlined in the primary and secondary science curriculum – this includes teaching about the main external parts of the human body, how it changes as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty, and the reproductive process in some plants and animals.

The school is free to determine whether students should be taught sex education beyond what is required of the national curriculum.

At our school, we do teach students sex education beyond what is required of the science curriculum if and when required.

Parents are fully consulted in the organisation and delivery of our sex education curriculum, in accordance with this policy.

Parents are given the opportunity to advise on what should be taught through sex education. The age and development of students is always considered when delivering sex education.

## **Delivery of the curriculum**

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The relationships, sex and health curriculum will be delivered as part of our PSHE curriculum.

Through effective organisation and delivery of the subject, we will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to students clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for students to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

The curriculum is delivered proactively, such that it addresses issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on children's physical, emotional and sexual development.

Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly the Equality Act 2010, so that students understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.

At the point we consider it appropriate to teach students about LGBTQ+, we will ensure that this content is fully integrated into the relationships, sex and health curriculum, rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson.

Students will be taught about LGBTQ+; however, we will always consider the development and maturity of students before teaching this topic.

The school ensures that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages of the students, their religious backgrounds, their developmental stages and their additional needs.

Lesson plans will provide appropriate challenge for students and be differentiated for individual students' needs.

Classes may be taught in gender-segregated groups, dependent upon the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, and the cultural background of students where it is only appropriate to discuss the body in single gender groups.

Throughout every class, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning.

Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age, developmental stage and cultural background of students.

Students will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the school's E-safety Policy.

Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programme accordingly.

Teachers will ensure that students' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriate to the student's age.

The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to ensure both are actively involved, matching their different learning styles.

Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of marriage and healthy relationships, though sensitivity will always be given as to not stigmatise students based on their home circumstances.

Teachers will ensure that lesson plans are centred around reducing stigma, particularly in relation to mental wellbeing, and encouraging openness through discussion activities and group work.

Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of students based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.

Any resources or materials used to support learning will be formally assessed by the PSHE Lead and Relationships and Vocational activities co-ordinator before use to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of students, and sensitive to their needs and understanding.

In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that students may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.

At all points of delivery of this programme, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how, will be planned in conjunction with parents.

Whilst there are no formal examinations for the relationships, sex and health curriculum, the school will undertake informal assessments to determine student progress – these include the following:

- Group presentations
- Group tasks
- Projects
- Tests

- Written assessment
- Self-evaluation

## **Work with external experts**

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External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the programme and will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

The school will ensure all visitor credentials are checked before they are able to participate in delivery of the curriculum, in line with the Visitor Policy.

The school will ensure that the teaching delivered by the external expert fits with the planned curriculum and this policy.

Before delivering the session, the school will discuss the details of the expert's lesson plan and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the students.

The school will also ask to see the materials the expert intends to use, as well as a copy of the lesson plan, to ensure it meets all individual students' needs.

The school will agree with the expert the procedures for confidentiality, ensuring that the expert understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The intended use of external experts is to enhance the curriculum delivered by teachers, rather than as a replacement for teachers.

## **Equality and accessibility**

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The school understands its responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010, specifically that it must not unlawfully discriminate against any student because of their:

- Age
- Sex or sexual orientation
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to promote accessibility and inclusivity of the curriculum.

The school understands that our students all have SEND or other needs (such as those with social, emotional or mental health needs) and are entitled to learn about relationships, sex and health education, and the programme will be designed to be inclusive of all students.

Teachers will understand that they may need to be more explicit and adapt their planning of work and teaching methods in order to appropriately deliver the programme to our students.

Provisions under the Equality Act 2010 allow our school to take positive action, where it can be evidenced to be proportionate, to respond to particular disadvantages affecting a group because of a protected characteristic. For example, we could consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

When deciding whether support is necessary to support students with a particular protected characteristic, we will consider our students' needs, including the gender and age range of our students.

In order to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, the school implements a robust Positive Behaviour Policy, as well as a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which set out expectations of students.

The school understands that students with SEND are entitled to learn about RSE and health education, and the curriculum will be designed to be inclusive of all students.

The school is aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND – teachers will understand that they may need to liaise with the PSHE Lead and be more explicit and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to our students.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of students at different developmental stages, the school will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

The school will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on students based on their gender or any other characteristic.

The school will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and tackled promptly.

The school will make clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Curriculum links**

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The school seeks opportunities to draw links between relationships, sex and health education and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance students' learning.

Relationships, Sex and Health education will be linked to the following subjects in particular:

- **Science** – students learn about the main external parts of the body and changes to the body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty.
- **Computing and ICT** – students learn about e-safety, including how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private and how to access help and support.
- **PE** – students explore various physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and understand how exercise can lead to healthier lifestyles.
- **Citizenship** – students learn about the requirements of the law, their responsibilities and the possible consequences of their actions.
- **PSHE** – students learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.

## **Withdrawing from the subjects**

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Relationships and Health education are statutory at a primary level and parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from the subjects.

As sex education is not statutory at a primary level (other than what must be taught as part of the science curriculum), parents have the right to request to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education curriculum.

The Head of School will automatically grant withdrawal requests; however, the Head of School will discuss the request with the parent and, if appropriate, their child, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

The Head of School will discuss with the parent, the benefits or receiving this important education and any adverse effects that withdrawal may have on the student – this could include, for example, social and emotional effects of being excluded.

The Head of School will keep a record of the discussion between themselves, the student and the parent.

The Head of School will grant a parent's request to withdraw their child from sex education, other than the content that must be taught as part of the science curriculum.

The parent will be informed in writing of the Head of School's decision.

Where a student is withdrawn from sex education, the Head of School will ensure that the student receives appropriate alternative education.

## **Behaviour**

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The school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. We aim to foster a culture based on mutual respect and understanding for one another.

Any bullying incidents caused as a result of the relationships, sex and health education programme, such as those relating to sexual orientation, will be dealt with as seriously as other bullying incidents within the school.

Any occurrence of these incidents will be reported to a member of school staff, who will then discipline the student once they are on school premises.

These incidents will be dealt with following the processes in our Positive Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Head of School will decide whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a student.

## **Staff training**

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All staff members at the school will undergo training on a timely basis to ensure they are up-to-date with the relationship, sex and health education programme and associated issues.

Members of staff responsible for teaching the subjects will undergo further training on a timely basis, led by the relationships, sex and health education leader, to ensure they are fully equipped to teach the subjects effectively.

Training of staff will also be scheduled around any updated guidance on the programme and any new developments, such as 'sexting', which may need to be addressed in relation to the programme.

The school will ensure teachers receive training on the Social Exclusion Report on Teenage Pregnancy, and the role of an effective RSE curriculum in reducing the number of teenage conceptions.

Appropriately trained staff will be able to give students information on where and how to obtain confidential advice, counselling and treatment, as well as guidance on emergency contraception and their effectiveness.

## **Confidentiality**

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Confidentiality within the classroom is an important component of relationships, sex and health education, and teachers are expected to respect the confidentiality of their students as far as is possible.

Teachers will, however, alert the Head of School about any suspicions of inappropriate behaviour or potential abuse as per the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Students will be fully informed of the school's responsibilities in terms of confidentiality and will be aware of what action may be taken if they choose to report a concern or make a disclosure.

Any reports made during lessons, or as a result of the content taught through the curriculum, will be reported to the DSL and handled in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Monitoring quality**

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The PSHE lead is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subjects.

The PSHE leader will conduct subject assessments on a termly basis, which will include a mixture of the following:

- Self-evaluations
- Lesson observations
- Topic feedback forms
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Lesson planning scrutiny

The PSHE lead will create annual subject reports for the Head of School to report on the quality of the subjects.

The PSHE lead will work regularly and consistently with the Head of School e.g. through regular review meetings, to evaluate the effectiveness of the subjects and implement any changes.

## **Monitoring and review**

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This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the PSHE lead teacher and the EQL. The next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2022.

This policy will also be reviewed in light of any changes to statutory guidance, feedback from parents, staff or students, and issues in the school or local area that may need addressing.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, parents and, where necessary, students.



# Letter to Parents Regarding RSE and health education

Ash Meadow School  
Jubits Lane  
St. Helens  
WA9 4RT

## **RE: RSE and health education at Ash Meadow School**

Dear Parent and/or Carer

Government guidelines outline that, from the age of 11, it is compulsory for all schools to provide an RSE and Health education curriculum.

At our school, we believe that it is important to provide our students with a thorough and balanced curriculum, including age-appropriate information about sex and relationships.

The details of what will be taught to the various year groups is detailed in the school's RSE and Health Education Policy, which can be accessed on our school website or in hard copy via our school office.

Though schools must provide RSE and health education for students from the age of 11, up until the age of 19, only aspects of the science national curriculum are compulsory for students to learn. Therefore, as parents, you are entitled to request that your child be removed from sex education lessons up to and until three terms before they turn 16-years-old. After that point, if your child wishes to receive relationships and sex education, the school will make arrangements to provide them with sex education during one of those terms.

Requests for withdrawal should be submitted in writing to myself, the Head of School, who will discuss this with you and your child's teacher, and determine an appropriate substitute for these lessons. In most instances, children will be provided with self-directed reading or exercises which they can complete under the supervision of a trainee teacher.

If you have any concerns or queries about your child's participation in these lessons, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or your child's class teacher to discuss these.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Clifford  
Executive Headteacher