

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (September 2021)

The Wells Academy



THE WELLS ACADEMY

RSHE SLT link:

S.Bailey

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Last reviewed on:

May 2021

Next review due by:

May 2022

Introduction

This policy outlines the academy's commitment to provide effective Relationships, Sex and Health Education for all pupils in support of that offered by parents, who are the first educators of their children in this area. It has been written with regard to the DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance 2019 and other relevant guidance documents and statutory requirements.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 make Relationships, Sex and Health Education compulsory for pupils receiving secondary education.

The RSHE teaching within the academy contributes to our statutory duty to safeguard pupils and prepare them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. RSHE is taught in a progressive, sequenced, age-appropriate manner throughout.

Formulation, dissemination, monitoring and review of policy

The RSE policy has been developed following consultation with the whole academy community. Consultation took place in the following ways:

- Review – SLT have worked with the local authority contact to collate all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – all academy staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – A webpage was created to provide information and give parents and any interested parties briefing notes of the expected changes to RSE. Parents also had the opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns via an online survey
- Pupil consultation – we investigated pupils RSE needs via an online survey
- Ratification – once amendments were made; the policy was shared with the academy council and ratified

In developing our policy and curriculum we have given due regard to the government's statutory guidance for RSHE issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

The RSHE policy is available on the academy website and free of charge to interested parties via reception.

The RSE policy and RSHE curriculum will be reviewed annually by the RSHE Co-ordinator, SLT and governors. This review will be informed by the following: pupil and staff evaluation of the programme; pupil assessment; changes in legislation and guidance; and, parent feedback (gathered through an annual survey).

What is RSHE?

RSHE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. Through RSHE pupils learn about healthy relationships, diversity, respect, love and commitment, healthy lifestyles, safety both on and offline, puberty, sex, sexuality and sexual health. There are often concerns that RSHE will encourage sexual experimentation however evidence shows

that those who receive comprehensive RSE at school are more likely to delay their first sexual activity and to use contraception when they do have sex (*Sex Education Forum website <https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/SRE%20-%20the%20evidence%20-%20March%202015.pdf>*.) At secondary level we are building on the foundations of skills and knowledge that pupils have learnt at primary school.

Our key aim in providing RSHE throughout the academy is to safeguard our pupils. During their time at the academy pupils will learn key knowledge and skills to help keep themselves, and others, safe, healthy, and prepare them for the responsibilities of adult life.

Why RSHE is important in our academy

The academy's values are reflected throughout our RSHE policy and curriculum; the academy promotes students having a positive impact on their family, community and the world. The RSHE curriculum will have a key focus on promotion of safeguarding our students and student wellbeing. Students will study an age appropriate curriculum around health and wellbeing, relationships and living in the wider world. Our RSHE curriculum also embeds British values, character development and equality.

We acknowledge that not all parents feel confident or comfortable talking to their children about specific topics therefore our work ensures that all pupils have a standard level of education about key aspects needed to keep safe and make positive, informed and healthy choices.

Key Objectives

Our RSHE programme will focus on three elements: exploring attitudes and values; developing skills; and, improving knowledge and understanding. We aim to develop well-rounded individuals who respect themselves and others, who can communicate effectively and take responsibility for their actions.

The key objectives of our RSHE programme are to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of what positive and healthy relationships look like and the skills to form nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships
- Enable pupils to recognise unhealthy relationships and abuse and have the knowledge and skills to seek help for themselves or others
- Give pupils the knowledge and skills to make informed, healthy decisions about their mental and physical health
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- Develop an awareness and understanding of relevant laws, for example those around consent, sexual violence, rape, drugs, and image-sharing
- Develop knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and sexual health, including Sexually Transmitted Infections, sexual orientation, contraception and reasons for delaying sexual activity
- Support pupils to develop a positive sense of their own identity, showing respect for themselves and others, and having resilience
- Support pupils to keep safe, both online and offline, including assessing the risks and benefits of their actions and recognising that pressures and influences come from a range of sources

- Provide pupils with the knowledge and skills to access appropriate support

The RSHE programme is based on the needs of our academy, taking into consideration the contextual information of the community and pupil needs (data from pupil consultation) with learning outcomes appropriate to their age, ability and level of maturity. RSHE will be firmly embedded within our broader curriculum areas, including Science, in addition to more focused learning through RSHE sessions, tutor-time and assemblies.

Equality, Inclusion and Support

We are required to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Our academy values diversity, encourages respect for all and promotes tolerance for, and celebration of, difference. We do not discriminate against pupils because of any protected characteristic (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation). At times, when there is an identified need, we may take positive action through our planning and delivery of RSHE to deal with disadvantages facing those with a particular characteristic.

RSHE will be accessible to all regardless of their gender. Through the delivery of RSHE teachers will explore gender stereotypes and how they may limit a person's potential and ensure that people of all genders receive information that is relevant to their needs.

There are many different faith and cultural perspectives within aspects of RSHE. We will deliver RSHE in a factual, non-judgmental way ensuring that teachers do not promote one faith or cultural viewpoint but rather provide a balanced approach that acknowledges the wealth of views and opinions of our community and teaches tolerance. Parents and carers are key partners in RSHE and are best placed to support their children to understand how learning at school fits with their family's faith, beliefs and values. To support this process we will ensure that parents are made aware of what will be taught in our RSHE programme and when, via the academy website.

We will use a range of materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our school population and encourage acceptance and tolerance. We want every pupil and family to feel included, celebrated, respected and valued.

Teachers will plan in different ways and use a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals. For some pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities, a differentiated approach may be necessary to ensure learning outcomes are met – this will be shared with parents/carers and a plan developed. Some pupils may have experienced adverse childhood experiences that may impact on their ability to engage with RSHE in a variety of ways. Care will be taken to ensure that, where this is the case parents/carers are consulted about the most appropriate way for the pupil to access the curriculum.

A range of different families and relationships will be explored within RSHE, including same-sex relationships. Referencing a range of relationships will be integral to our programme of RSHE. All pupils whatever their identity, developing identity, or family background need to feel that RSHE is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. This means that resources and books used will reflect both our academy community and wider society.

The Curriculum

RSHE will be taught in each year group throughout the academy. The curriculum we deliver is age-appropriate and progressive, building the pupil's knowledge, understanding and skills year on year. We work to objectives in each year group that support the achievement of outcomes outlined in the government RSHE guidance. See *Appendix A* for the outline of the RSHE scheme of work.

Some elements of RSHE are delivered through national curriculum Science:

Key Stage 3

Pupils should be taught about:

- reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.
- The effects of recreational drugs (including substance misuse) on behaviour, health and life processes
- Comparing energy values of different foods (from labels) (kJ)

Key Stage 4

Pupils should be taught about:

- The relationship between health and disease
- communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDs)
- reducing and preventing the spread of infectious diseases in animals and plants
- the impact of lifestyle factors in the incidence of non-communicable diseases
- hormones in human reproduction, hormonal and non-hormonal methods of contraception
- sex determination in humans

In addition to the Science curriculum we will work towards the outcomes outlined in the government's RSHE Guidance, under the headings shown below. Each topic will be covered in an age-appropriate way during a pupil's time at the academy, with regular repetition of key themes. These elements will be delivered through timetabled PSHE sessions, drop down RSHE sessions, tutor time and assemblies. Learning will also be supported through cross-curricular approaches.

RSHE topics:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media

- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health
- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy Eating
- Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco
- Knife crime
- Health and Prevention
- Basic First Aid
- Changing adolescent body
- Careers
- Finance

The curriculum will be evaluated and reviewed by pupils and teachers on a regular basis through pupil and staff voice, online questionnaires and via the student council.

Resources

As with any other subject, the breadth of the RSHE curriculum necessitates the use of a wide variety of age-appropriate activities, textbooks and resources. We offer opportunities for parents to familiarise themselves with the content of RSHE through the academy website, your child's tutor and parents evenings.

If you would like to discuss any of the resources used in more detail please contact your child's Pastoral Lead.

Teaching and Learning

The academy is responsible for planning lesson content and providing relevant resources to all teaching staff who deliver. Teaching assistants may provide additional support for pupils with SEND. Everyone involved in the teaching of RSHE will follow the academy policy.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff will not influence the delivery of RSHE. A balanced and non-judgmental approach will be taken. Teachers, and all those contributing to RSHE, will work to the agreed values within this policy.

To ensure that all pupils feel able to contribute effectively to RSHE a number of teaching strategies will be used, including:

- Establishing a group agreement with pupils;
- Using 'distancing' techniques (eg. Case studies and role-play)
- Dealing with questions in an age-appropriate manner
- Using discussion and appropriate materials
- Encouraging reflection.

External speakers

The academy may use outside visitors to enhance the RSHE provision delivered by teachers. We plan these inputs carefully to ensure effectiveness. All visiting speakers will:

- be suitably qualified to deliver RSHE sessions
- be aware of the academy policy on RSHE and work within this
- be supervised by a member of staff at all times when on the academy premises
- alert the teacher to any safeguarding concerns
- understand their contribution they make to the broader RSHE programme

Safe learning in RSHE

It is important that all pupils feel safe and able to participate in RSHE lessons. To support the involvement of all pupils, teachers will create a group agreement with each class outlining expectations around rights, responsibilities and respect. The group agreement will be a working document that all pupils agree to follow.

As with any topic pupils will ask questions during RSHE to further their understanding. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic teachers will employ strategies to ensure that questions are asked and answered in a factual, balanced and age-appropriate way. The group agreement will remind pupils that personal questions of the teacher or other pupils are not appropriate.

Some staff may feel it is appropriate to use a 'question box' to allow all pupils an opportunity to write questions down if they do not choose to ask these in front of the whole class.

Teachers will use the following strategies to deal with unexpected questions:

- If a question is personal, the teacher will remind pupils of the rules set in the group agreement
- If the teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, the teacher will acknowledge this and will research the question and provide an appropriate answer later.

Sometimes pupils may ask questions about issues that are not part of the planned programme, this could show that the taught curriculum is not meeting their needs. These questions will be answered in a factual and balanced manner appropriate to the age of pupils. The questions will also be fed back to the Coordinator as part of the evaluation and monitoring process.

Staff training

All staff delivering RSHE will receive training. If a staff member has additional learning and development needs these will be supported either through mentoring from a more experienced staff member in school, team-teaching, observations, or attendance at an internal or external training event. Training on more specific RSHE topics will take place as and when required to support the needs of teachers, pupils and the academy as a whole.

Assessment and Review

Teachers use a range of assessment strategies to track pupils' progress towards our published learning outcomes. This may include verbal feedback from teachers,

presentations, self-assessment and peer assessment. Pupil's effort and contributions in RSHE will be included in the end of year report.

Parents

We believe that RSHE is a partnership between the academy and parents/carers. We recognise that parents are the first teachers of their children and welcome their engagement with our RSHE programme. It is important that RSHE is explored in more detail within the context of individual families. Information regarding the RSHE curriculum and delivery will be updated via the academy website.

Parents will be given the opportunity to share their feedback annually through a parent survey.

Any parents wanting more information about our RSHE curriculum can contact their child's Pastoral Lead.

Right to be excused from sex education:

Whilst we always try to work with parents to explore their views, we also accept that parents can exercise their right to excuse their child from the sex education elements of our programme (other than that which comes within the Science curriculum). There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. You can see in *Appendix A* which parts of our programme are sex education. The RSHE we provide is planned to meet the needs of all pupils and give them the knowledge and skills they need to lead healthy lives. Withdrawing pupils from RSHE can be detrimental and lead to them receiving less accurate, second-hand information from peers.

To request that a pupil be excused from Sex Education parents should write to the Principal. The Principal will arrange to speak with parents to explore their views and ensure that the nature and purpose of RSHE is understood. A written record will be kept of this discussion. Except in exceptional circumstances the school will respect a parent's right to excuse their child up until three terms before a pupil's 16th birthday when the child can choose to be included in Sex Education.

The process above is the same for pupils with SEND, however in exceptional circumstances the Principal may take account a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND when agreeing any application to be excused.

Teachers will plan appropriate, purposeful education for pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Confidentiality, Safeguarding and Child Protection

Everyone involved in RSHE will be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. Teachers will discuss confidentiality with pupils through the development of a group agreement at the start of lessons, making it clear that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Pupils will be informed if confidentiality has to be broken, due to safeguarding concerns, they will be supported as appropriate. Please see our Safeguarding policy for more details of risk factors.

Through taught lessons, teaching staff will signpost pupils to sources of confidential local and national support services such as; the school nurse, counsellor or any other appropriate agencies. Health professionals working outside of school lessons are bound by their own professional code of conduct.

Further information

If you would like to discuss our provision of RSHE further please contact the Pastoral Leads or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If you have a complaint about any aspect of our RSHE provision please follow the academy's complaints procedure.

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Appendix A

	Autumn 1 Health & wellbeing	Autumn 2 Health & wellbeing	Spring 1 Relationships	Spring 2 Relationships	Summer 1 Living in the wider world	Summer 2 Living in the wider world
Year 7	Transition and safety Transition to secondary school and personal safety in and outside school, including first aid, understanding our community	Health and puberty Healthy routines, influences on health, puberty, unwanted contact, and FGM	Diversity Diversity, prejudice, and bullying	Building relationships Self-worth, romance and friendships (including online) and relationship boundaries	Developing skills and aspirations Careers, teamwork and enterprise skills, and raising aspirations	Financial decision making Saving, borrowing, budgeting and making financial choices
Year 8	Drugs and alcohol Alcohol and drug misuse and pressures relating to drug use	Emotional wellbeing Mental health and emotional wellbeing, including body image and coping strategies	Discrimination Discrimination in all its forms, including: racism, religious discrimination, disability, discrimination, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia	Identity and relationships Gender identity, sexual orientation, consent, 'sexting', and an introduction to contraception	Community and careers Equality of opportunity in careers and life choices, and different types and patterns of work	Digital literacy Online safety, digital literacy, media reliability, and gambling hooks
Year 9	Peer influence, substance use and gangs Healthy and unhealthy friendships, assertiveness, substance misuse, and gang exploitation	Healthy lifestyle Diet, exercise, lifestyle balance and healthy choices, and first aid	Respectful relationships Families and parenting, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and relationship changes	Intimate relationships Relationships and sex education including consent, contraception, the risks of STIs, and attitudes to pornography	Setting goals Learning strengths, career options and goal setting as part of the GCSE options process	Employability skills Employability and online presence

Year 10	Mental health Mental health and ill health, stigma, safeguarding health, including during periods of transition or change	Exploring influence The influence and impact of drugs, gangs, role models and the media	Healthy relationships Relationships and sex expectations, myths, pleasure and challenges, including the impact of the media and pornography	Addressing extremism and radicalisation Communities, belonging and challenging extremism	Financial decision making The impact of financial decisions, debt, gambling and the impact of advertising on financial choices	Work experience Preparation for and evaluation of work experience and readiness for work
Year 11	Building for the future Self-efficacy, stress management, and future opportunities	Independence Responsible health choices, and safety in independent contexts	Communication in relationships Personal values, assertive communication (including in relation to contraception and sexual health), relationship challenges and abuse	Families Different families and parental responsibilities, pregnancy, marriage and forced marriage and changing relationships	Next steps Application processes, and skills for further education, employment and career progression	

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