



Policy for Relationships and Sex Education



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Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Statutory requirements	2
3. Policy development.....	3
4. Definition	3
5. Curriculum.....	4
6. Delivery of RSE	4
7. Use of external organisations and materials	6
8. Roles and responsibilities	7
9. Parents’ right to withdraw	8
10. Training	8
11. Monitoring arrangements.....	8
Appendix 1: Curriculum map.....	8
Reffley Academy - RSHE	8
Appendix 2: By the end of primary school pupils should know.....	9
Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE	12
Appendix 3 – Top tips for talking to your child	13

This policy sets out our approach to relationships and sex education (RSE) across the Ad Meliora Academy Trust.

1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) in our trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy, and to cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

2. Statutory requirements

As a trust with primary academies, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

This policy has regard to the DfE statutory guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'.

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

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

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996.
- Part 6 chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

RSE is a key part of safeguarding and supports pupils to recognise abuse, stay safe and seek help.

At the Ad Meliora Academy Trust we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff/working group of staff from each academy pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation – staff across all schools were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy at their respective schools.
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE.
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with local governors and the Academy Committee for ratification.

4. Definition

For the purpose of this policy:

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

Teaching will include families of all types, including those with same-sex parents, in line with statutory guidance.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

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

We will share any curriculum resources and materials with parents and carers on request.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). This policy also supports delivery of statutory Health Education.

Academies within the Trust will make sure that:

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

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me,
- Caring friendships,
- Respectful, kind relationships,
- Online safety and awareness,
- Being safe.

Online safety teaching aligns with safeguarding expectations in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings,
- How a baby is conceived and born.

Throughout each year group we will use material to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Games
- Discussions and practical activities

Teachers will make sure that all pupils' views are listened to, and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the ages of the pupils.

The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to make sure both are actively involved.

Academies within the Trust will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Resources and materials will be formally assessed prior to use.

The academy will continue to engage parents regularly and share curriculum materials.

Assessment will be through teacher assessment.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance, and share any relevant materials on request.

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

Across our Trust, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property or hate crime.

6.1 Inclusivity

Our schools will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

They will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions

- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

6.2 Use of resources

Our schools will consider whether any resources they plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance.
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings.
- Are age-appropriate, given the age and maturity of the pupils.
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics.
- Fit into our curriculum plan.
- Are from credible sources.
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches.
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress.

7. Use of external organisations and materials

Across the academies within the Trust, we will make sure that any agency and any materials used are accurate, appropriate and unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

Our academies **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where they have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses.
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum.
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with.
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use.
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow usual safeguarding procedures for these people.
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to the school, or to parents and carers.

- Check the agency’s protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session.
- Remind teachers that they can say “no” or, in extreme cases, stop a session.
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers.
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers.
- Share all external materials with parents and carers.

Our academies **won’t**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions.
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme.
- Work with agencies who don’t allow their material to be shared with parents and carers.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The Academy Committee

The Board of Directors has delegated the approval of this policy to the Academy Committees. The Academy Committees will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 CEO

The CEO will:

- Review the policy.
- Work with headteachers to make sure they can implement the policy in their academies.
- Report to the Board of Directors on any issues with its implementation across the trust.

8.3 Local Academy Committees

Local Academy Committees are responsible for supporting the implementation of the policy at their academy and reporting issues to the Board of Directors if they occur.

8.4 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for making sure that RSE is taught consistently across their academy, for making sure that all resources and materials are shared with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 9).

8.5 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE.
- Monitoring progress.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE.
- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes.

- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the academy's designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

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

8.6 Pupils

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

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher of the academy. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the academy, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Headteacher through planning reviews, learning walks and discussions with pupils.

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

This policy will be reviewed by the academy Headteachers and CEO annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Academy Committees.

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

[Relationships and sex education curriculum map and progression of skills – Blenheim Park](#)

[Relationships and sex education curriculum map and progression of skills – Greenpark](#)

[Reffley Academy - RSHE](#)

Appendix 2: By the end of primary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care for me	<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 and happy family life, such as: 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 other children's families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their own, but that they should respect those differences and know that other families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of 2 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
Caring friendships	<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 that lead to happiness and security, including: mutual respect, truthfulness, trust and trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy, caring and kind friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships • That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened • About managing conflict with kindness and respect, and that violence is never right • How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful, kind relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we can balance the needs and wishes of different people, and why this can be complicated • The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in all relationships with friends, family, peers and adults • How to communicate effectively: how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries and manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration • That they can expect to be treated with respect and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example: physically, in character, personality or background), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs • The practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. They should have opportunities to consider issues like self-esteem and building a sense of their own identity • Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs • 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 • How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm or when they are unsure who to trust • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online safety and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not and/or pretending to be a child • 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 including how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • That there is a minimum age for joining most social media sites which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe content with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults • That it's important to be cautious about sharing any information about themselves online, and how to use privacy and location settings to protect their information online • 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, including where pictures or words might be circulated • Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up • That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources for example • 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 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) including those they do/don't know • How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust • How to report concerns or abuse, about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice, for example from their family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS

Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE ACADEMY

Agreed actions from discussion with parents	

Appendix 3 – Top tips for talking to your child

Talking to your child about their bodies, relationships, puberty and sex is important; building good channels of communication throughout childhood can help your child to communicate with you as future issues of increasing importance arise and may help to reduce risk taking behaviours as they approach adulthood.

Your child needs to know that it's OK to talk, and that you're happy to talk about it. They will learn this through your body language, tone and manner when you talk, so try to behave as though you would in any other normal, everyday topic of conversation.

Simple strategies to make talking about bodies, relationships, puberty and sex more comfortable:

- ✓ Start off by talking about something that you both find more comfortable, such as feelings and emotions.
- ✓ Ask them what they think their friends know/think about the topic, as this provides a way to talk about your child's views indirectly.
- ✓ Avoid 'The Chat'. Talk about these issues little and often, over everyday events like washing up or watching TV. This can help to normalise the conversation, and ease uncomfortable feelings.
- ✓ Don't leave it too late. Start talking about puberty before you feel your child is approaching it so that you already have strong channels of communication established in readiness.
- ✓ Be prepared to listen. Your child will want to have their voice heard without feeling judged and feeling listened to will encourage them to come to you to talk about issues in the future.
- ✓ If they ask you a question that you are not sure how to answer, that is OK. Suggest that you find out the answer together and then you will both know!
- ✓ Try to listen calmly, even if what they say surprises or concerns you. Try to remember that it is good that they are comfortable to discuss issues with you, and that they need to trust you will not respond negatively.

Make sure they know that they can always talk to you anytime, about anything.