



# **Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

**Review Cycle:** 2 Years – Autumn Term

Review By: Leadership Team, Behaviour & Attendance Sub-  
Committee

## **Contents:**

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# **SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS POLICY**

## **Introduction**

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

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is the right and responsibility of the parent/carer. Alcester Academy provides RSE to support parents/carers in fulfilling their responsibility and to contribute to every students' health, wellbeing and preparation for adult life.

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all students as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the new statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2020.

Documents that inform this RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010) Keeping children safe in Education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Relationships and Sex Education RSE Secondary- Statutory Guidance September 2021

## **Definition:**

We define 'relationships and sex education' as learning about physical, moral and emotional development that students need in order to understand their own and others sexuality. Whilst knowledge of biology and the reproductive system is important, RSE is concerned with attitudes and values, personal and social skills, respect for self and others, family, stable loving relationships, feelings, gender roles and decision-making. It is about the physical, emotional, social, moral and legal dimensions of human sexuality as well as factual teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health.

We believe it is important to address this area of the curriculum because pupils have a universal entitlement to learning that will enable them to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The programme contributes to protecting children and young people by addressing national and local health priorities. Recent NSPCC studies have also directly informed our sessions.

Our RSE provision also acts to protect children and young people from concerns raised through the pastoral system in school. Aspects of RSE are a statutory entitlement for young people at Key Stages 3 and 4. It provides a comprehensive body of knowledge and understanding about sexual health to manage fertility and avoid infection. We believe it is important to address relationships and sex education in this age group because they are considered to be a vulnerable age. This is further supported by the recent studies into child exploitation and teenage domestic violence.

## **Aims:**

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage, civil partnership or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).

It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

At Alcester Academy we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

The Academy aims to:-

- a) encourage pupils to have a regard for moral considerations, the value of family life, the responsibilities of parenthood and to recognise religious and cultural differences.
- b) encourage pupils to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity and respect for themselves and others.
- c) present facts in a balanced and objective way so that pupils understand that there are different sexual attitudes and behaviour.
- d) encourage pupils to consider their own attitudes and to make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions, both in school and in later adult life.
- e) foster a recognition that both sexes should behave responsibly in sexual matters.
- f) make pupils aware of what is and is not legal.

In addition to the above the aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at our school, we aim 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
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

## **Responsibilities:**

### **Governors:**

The Governors are responsible for:

- (i) deciding the Academy's overall approach to sex education,
- (ii) the two year review of the sex education policy.

### **The Headteacher:**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that SRE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of SRE.

### **School staff:**

The staff are responsible for:

- Ground rules are negotiated with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or breach of confidentiality;
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support;
- At all times teaching will take place in the context of an explicit moral framework;
- All points of view they may express during the course of teaching RSE are unbiased;
- The teaching of RSE is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- The emphasis of teaching RSE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices;
- Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSE;
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is inappropriate for staff to give students personal advice on matters such as contraception;
- Where a student has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the student is aware of the implications of their behaviour. The member of staff should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching SRE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for RSE.

### **Pupils:**

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

### **Parents / Carers:**

Alcester Academy acknowledges the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

All Parents/Carers will be:

- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE;

- Encouraged to participate in the development of Relationships Education and RSE;
- Able to discuss any concerns directly with the Academy.

### **Delivery of SRE**

SRE will be delivered through a variety of Super Learning Days during years 7 – 11 and sessions delivered by specialist organisations such as Loudmouth, COMPASS, School Health, Lifespace.

Biological aspects of SRE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education, also within philosophy and ethics lessons as well as tutor time/

Pupils may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional as required.

### **Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported with developing the following skills:**

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work

### **Content of sex education**

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

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

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

The aim of SRE is also to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health.

Aspects of RSE that will be covered include conception, childbirth, Sexually Transmitted Infections including HIV and AIDS and sexuality. Other aspects of safeguarding will also form part of topics covered such as Child Sexual Exploitation, consent and grooming.

Our cross curricular SRE aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour and includes:

- To have the confidence and self esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the
- skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within
- sexual and pastoral relationships.
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and
- relationship issues.
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality;
- challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they
- have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually
- transmitted infections including HIV.
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access
- confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

For more detailed information, please refer to Appendix 1.

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents' have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of SRE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Assistant Head teacher who oversees this area. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Assistant headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from SRE.

### **Advice to individual pupils**

Teachers and other professionals will exercise their discretion and judgement when dealing with particularly explicit issues raised by an individual pupil.

Teachers are advised to encourage a pupil asking for specific advice on family planning or other aspects of sexual behaviour, to seek advice from their parents, and if appropriate from the relevant health service professionals.

Where the teacher believes that a pupil has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place them at moral or physical risk or in breach of the law, the teacher has a general responsibility to ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications and the pupil is urged to inform their parents and/or seek professional advice.

The member of staff cannot promise confidentiality to the pupil and where there is a risk that a teacher might be compromised when speaking to individual pupils, they are advised that it would be wiser to be accompanied by another member of staff. In all cases, members of staff should inform the academy's designated senior leader for Child Protection, who may **take further action in line with the Child Protection Policy.**

Guidance in cases of suspected child abuse is clearly defined in the Academy's Child Protection Policy.

### **Pupils with Additional Educational Needs (SEND):**

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education will be accessible for all pupils. High quality teaching is differentiated and personalised, this is the starting point to ensure accessibility for all pupils. Academies will also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when preparing these subjects for pupils with SEND.

The Academy is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education can also be a priority for some pupils, for example some with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs or learning disabilities. For some pupils there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meeting the specific needs of children at different development stages.

### **Ethnic and Cultural Groups:**

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

### **Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation:**

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

### **Visitors and outside agencies**

All visitors and outside agencies involved in the provision of sex education will be accompanied at all times by Academy staff. They will work within the aims and guidelines contained within the sex and relationships policy and contribute to the Academy's overall mission statement.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years by Governors or sooner if necessary according to national changes.

Parents have had the opportunity to review and consult on the policy.

RSE is continually reviewed annually by the Assistant Head teacher and those delivering sessions to update activities as necessary.

Students also evaluate their SLD sessions throughout the year and we use these to adapt future sessions as needed and also provide further information on topics for students should this be necessary,

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors  
**Mr M Dean**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher  
**Mrs S Mellors**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(ratified by the Full Governing Body on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024)



## Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</li> <li>• How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</li> <li>• The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</li> <li>• The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</li> <li>• How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed</li> </ul>
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship</li> <li>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li> <li>• How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)</li> <li>• That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs</li> <li>• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</li> <li>• That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</li> <li>• What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</li> <li>• The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</li> <li>• About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online</li> <li>• Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</li> <li>• What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</li> <li>• The impact of viewing harmful content</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</li> <li>• How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing</li> <li>• The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</li> <li>• That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</li> <li>• That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</li> <li>• The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</li> <li>• The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</li> <li>• That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)</li> <li>• How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing</li> <li>• About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</li> <li>• How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</li> <li>• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul>