

Relationship and Sex Education and Physical and Mental Well-being Policy



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1. Introduction

The Duston School believes that in order to create a happy and successful adult life, children and young people need to have the self-confidence to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is about giving children and young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Health Education is giving pupils information to make well-informed, positive choices about their own health and wellbeing. The school recognises that physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

The school has a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the best for all its pupils irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion or sexual orientation. As a result, RSE will be sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may need to adapt and change over time to reflect the needs of the particular cohort. The school may also take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic.

The school is aware of the need to be mindful of and respectful to a wide variety of faith and cultural beliefs across the school, and will make every attempt to be appropriately sensitive; equally it is essential that children and young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. The school believes that its pupils deserve the right to honest, clear, impartial scientific and factual information to help better form their own beliefs and values, free from bias, judgement or subjective personal beliefs of those who teach them.

2. Aims

Through the delivery of high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate RSE, Relationship and Health Education, The Duston School aims to help prepare pupils for the onset of puberty, give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene, create a positive culture in relation to sexuality and relationships and to ensure pupils know how and when to ask for help and where to access support. By the end of their education, the school hopes pupils will have developed resilience and feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy in preparation for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

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. The curriculum aims 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

3. Statutory requirements

This policy complies with the statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019, issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. We must have regard to this guidance by virtue of our funding agreements with the Secretary of State.

4. Policy development

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

1. Review – a member of staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Senior Leader consultation – all senior leaders were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to comment on the policy
4. Pupil consultation – a pupil voice group were invited to discuss what they wanted from RSE.
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

The policy will be reviewed annually, and parents will be consulted in advance about significant changes.

5. Definition

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that gives pupils the confidence to make sound decisions when facing risks and other challenges. It includes teaching about friendship, the importance of caring, stable and mutually supportive relationships with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship.

RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches children and young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others, to build self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity so that they can develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

RSE will outline that there are different types of committed, stable relationships, the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships, the importance of marriage as a relationship choice and why it must be freely entered into, how relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for raising children, as well as highlighting the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, characteristics of successful parenting and how to judge when relationships have become unsafe as well as how to seek help or advice and report concerns about others.

6. Curriculum

The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum covers:

- Health and wellbeing;
- Relationships and sex education; and
- Living in the wider world.

Further details on these topics can be found in the PSHE Curriculum Vision document in appendix 1.

7. Delivery of RSE

RSE will be delivered in science, religious education, computing and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and will build on the foundation of RSE or Relationships Education delivered in primary school.

When sex and relationships education is taught as part of the National Curriculum Science course, it is treated in a factual way and deals with biological details of the reproductive system.

Trained health professionals will also be used to deliver content where appropriate.

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).

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

RSE will be delivered in a non-judgmental, factual way allowing scope for pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Teachers will tailor the delivery of RSE to meet the specific needs of the pupils in that class, and to be responsive to their behaviour and development. Teachers delivering RSE are trained in distancing techniques. Classes will explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable pupils to make informed decisions regarding sex and relationships as well as being able to differentiate between fact, opinion and belief and an understanding of the law on various topics. Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

8. Health Education: Physical health and mental well-being

The school wishes to promote pupils' health and well-being by encouraging self-control, their ability to self-regulate and strategies for doing so. This will enable pupils to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. The school believes that an integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing will have a positive impact on behaviour and attainment. Health Education will be delivered in science, Physical Education (PE) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE).

9. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

The school will endeavour to ensure that RSE and Health Education is accessible for all pupils. We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and RSE and Health Education may be particularly important for such pupils, for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Teaching will be sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, differentiated and personalised to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages.

Staff will make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage faced by pupils with disabilities and will be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice and the school's SEND Policy when planning for these subjects. Staff will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information, which include modelling of written activities, careful scaffolding of activities and expert guest speakers where appropriate.

10. Roles and responsibilities

All members of the school community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community are set out in detail below.

The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body will monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy by reviewing pupils' progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes. They will hold the Principal to account for the implementation of the policy. They will scrutinise relevant data, review any issues that might arise and act as a point of challenge for decisions taken by the Principal.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 6).

The Principal, with support from the Senior Leadership Team, will ensure that staff are supported, receive regular professional development training in how to deliver RSE and are up to date with policy changes.

They will ensure that RSE is well led, effectively managed and well planned across various subjects (to avoid unnecessary duplication of topics) and that the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.

The Principal will ensure that teaching is age-appropriate, delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND and that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled appropriately.

They will ensure that teaching delivered by any external organisation is age-appropriate and accessible for pupils and will liaise with parents regarding any concerns or opinions regarding RSE and Health Education provision and will manage parental requests for withdrawal of pupils from non-statutory, non-science components of RSE.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE

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 Principal.

Teachers of RSE, Relationships and Health Education will ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education and will attend and engage in professional development training. Teachers will encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they will take this concern to their line-manager.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to take RSE, Relationships and Health Education seriously. They are encouraged to speak to their teacher or tutor regarding any concerns. Pupils are expected to listen, be considerate of other pupils' feelings and beliefs, comply with class-set confidentiality rules and support one another with issues that arise during class. Pupils who fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

Parents

The school hopes to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents through mutual understanding, cooperation and trust. Parents are expected to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. The school hopes parents will create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support from the school where they feel it is needed.

11. Parents' right to withdraw

The school hopes that parents will feel comfortable with, and understand the importance of, the education provided to their children as described in this policy. Before withdrawing or making a request, the school strongly urges parents to carefully consider their decision as sex education is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the principal.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

If a pupil is excused from sex education the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

12. Training

Staff training in the delivery of RSE will be provided by the PSHE lead and external visitors, such as the school nurse and sexual health professionals, where necessary.

13. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHE lead through:

- Regular learning walks, work sampling and pupil voice panels
- Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers.
- PSHE is monitored through the school's routine quality assurance cycle.
- This policy will be reviewed annually.

14. Confidentiality and Child Protection

The school hopes to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. All teachers will receive training around confidentiality and should ensure that pupils understand that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. If a child protection issue is disclosed to a member of staff, that member of staff should follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures.

If a staff member is approached by a pupil under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- ensure that the pupil is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active;
- encourage the pupil to talk to their parent or carer. Pupils may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible;
- decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a member of staff is informed that a pupil under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures.

Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

15. Equal opportunities

RSE and Health Education will be delivered equally to both genders, normally in mixed classes. There are, however, certain topics that may be delivered in single sex groupings e.g. menstruation and personal hygiene.

The school has a commitment to ensure that RSE and Health Education is relevant to all pupils and is taught in a way that is age and stage appropriate. Pupils are encouraged to openly and freely discuss diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

16. Complaints

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Principal in accordance with the school's complaints policy.

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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<p>That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</p> <p>How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</p> <p>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</p> <p>Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</p> <p>The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</p> <p>How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed</p>
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<p>The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship</p> <p>Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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</p> <p>About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</p> <p>That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</p> <p>What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</p> <p>The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<p>Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</p> <p>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</p> <p>Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</p> <p>What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</p> <p>The impact of viewing harmful content</p> <p>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</p> <p>That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</p> <p>How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</p>
Being safe	<p>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</p> <p>How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</p> <p>That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</p> <p>That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</p> <p>The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</p> <p>The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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</p> <p>About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</p> <p>How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</p> <p>How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</p>

Appendix 3: 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 SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	