



Ark St Alban's Academy

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Owner	Daniel Gallanders
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Laurence Cole
Principal	Guy Rimmer
Chair of Governors	Jo Dawson
Date of next Review	September 2024

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Ark St Alban's Academy

This policy covers our Academy's approach to Relationships and Sex Education. It is written by Senior Leaders in consultation with the Local Governing Body, colleagues from the Ark network and pupils & parents.

Contents:

1. Purpose
 2. Outcomes
 3. Roles and Responsibilities
 4. Legislation
 5. Safeguarding
 6. Parents and carers
 7. Assessment
-

1. Purpose

1.1. We define 'relationships and sex education' as giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, including intimate relationships.

This will help pupils understand the following:

- The positive effects that healthy relationships have on their mental wellbeing
- The characteristics of unhealthy relationships and how to safely address them

1.2. The effective teaching of relationships and sex education is a central part of the important work we do to ensure pupils relate positively to each other on a day to day basis.

1.3. It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE; however, the starting principle when teaching this must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

1.4. Key aspects of the law relating to sex and relationships which should be taught include the age of consent and what consent is and is not, as well as the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and the choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

1.5. Some pupils are also exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader relationships education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.

1.6. We ensure relationships and sex education is inclusive and meets the needs of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEN/D) by carefully planning sequences of lessons that are accessible to all pupils, whilst still meeting the requirements of the statutory guidance and our intended learning aims.

2. Outcomes

Over the five-year journey from Year 7 to Year 11, the following five themes are taught, and they are then revisited and the built upon in sixth form. These themes are taken directly from the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education on the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education in schools (June 2019).

I. Families

Within families, pupils learn about the types of stable relationships including marriage as an important choice that must be freely entered into as well as the role of parents when raising children.

II. Respectful relationships including friendships

Within respectful relationships, pupils learn about the characteristics of healthy relationships including friendships and the types of negative behaviours within relationships that are always unacceptable.

III. Online and media

Within online and media, pupils will learn about the risks of being online and how the expectations of online behaviour are the same as the ones in real life.

IV. Being safe

Within being safe, pupils will learn to recognise consent, including sexual consent, and the concepts and laws associated with a range of issues taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education and the RSE statutory guidance.

V. Sexual relationships including sexual health

Within this theme, pupils learn about the positive aspects of healthy and safe intimate relationships and that health can be affected by choices made, and they will learn facts around a range of issues including STIs, contraception, pregnancy and miscarriage.

By the end of Year 11 pupils at Ark St Alban's Academy should know:

Families

- a. that there are different types of committed, stable relationships
- b. how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children
- c. 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
- d. why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into
- e. the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
- f. the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting
- g. 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

Respectful relationships including friendships

- a. 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
- b. practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships

- c. 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)
- d. 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
- e. about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- f. that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- g. what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- h. 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

Online and media

- a. Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- b. 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
- c. not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- d. what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- e. The impact of viewing harmful content
- f. 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
- g. that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- h. how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

Being safe

- a. 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
- b. 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)

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- a. 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

- b. 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
- c. the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- d. that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- e. that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- f. the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- g. the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- h. 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)
- i. 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
- j. about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- k. how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- l. how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
- m. In addition, our curriculum also explicitly teaches our pupils what the law says about sex, relationships, as well as broader safeguarding issues. These include: a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology

There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. Pupils will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including: marriage, consent, including the age of consent, violence against women and girls, online behaviours including image and information sharing (including nudes and semi-nudes, youth-produced sexual imagery, etc.), pornography, abortion, sexuality, gender identity, substance misuse, violence and exploitation by gangs, extremism/radicalisation, criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations), hate crime, female genital mutilation (FGM).

These are linked together to form units or parts of units within our Character RSE Curriculum and they build upon topics included in the primary school curriculum.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Governing Board will approve the RSE policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

3.2. The Principal, Vice Principal (Pastoral) and Assistant Principal (Pastoral) are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils.

3.3. The RSE Lead, line managed by the Assistant Principal (Pastoral) and supported through the wider pastoral leadership team, has the following responsibilities:

- Develop the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum to ensure the needs of all pupils from Y7-Y13 are met and that statutory content is effectively delivered across the Academy
- Develop strong partnerships with other curriculum areas and with pastoral teams
- Work with external organisations to enhance delivery of the RSE curriculum, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people, where applicable
- Ensure the religious background of all pupils is considered when planning the curriculum and teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content in this guidance are appropriately handled
- Enable all teachers to achieve expertise in the delivery of RSE, through coaching and support and through the provision of CPD and inset training days
- Support the planning and delivery of the wider character programme

3.4. The RSE curriculum will be taught to pupils by their form tutors, who know them best.

The role of the form tutor is to:

- Skilfully and sensitively deliver the RSE curriculum
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress and respond to the needs of individual pupils
- 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 should not enter into discussions about personal issues and lifestyles
- No pupil or member of staff is expected to ask or answer questions about their life
- Teachers will promote the knowledge and use of accepted, biological names of body parts.
- Meanings of words are explained in a sensible and factual way

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

3.6. Standards of presentation and behaviour (including the academy behaviour policy) are expected to be maintained in RSE lessons in the same manner as they are in all other curriculum areas.

3.7. When provided with the opportunity to engage with pupil voice activities and to inform the content and aims of the curriculum, pupils are expected to reflect the principles included in section one of this policy ('Purpose').

3.8 External Providers:

3.8.1 To complement the curriculum we will use a verified and well-established external provider – Loudmouth – to help communicate some of the key themes through live theatre and workshops.

3.8.2 Leaders will continue to consider the role of further external organisations in supplementing our work in achieving our intended learning aims, however before inviting any external organisation to work with our pupils, detailed scrutiny will take place to ensure that any content aligns with our academy values and this policy.

4. Legislation

4.1. 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 Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

4.2. Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Department for Education (2019)
- Education Act (1996)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance
- Equality Act (2010),
- SEND code of practice: 0-25 years – Statutory guidance 2015
- PSHE Association Programme of Study

5. Curriculum design

5.1 At Ark St Alban's Academy RSE is an integral part of the wider character programme that is taught by form tutors, during tutor time, every morning and during a weekly Character lesson. Each year group is taught RSE in every year where prior learning, including learning from primary school, is built on over time.

5.2 Learning about relationships and sex education in tutor time links to learning in the KS3 and KS4 science curriculum and the Religious Education curriculum.

6. Safe and effective practice - Safeguarding

6.1. Through RSE, pupils will be taught the knowledge they need to recognise and report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This will be delivered in a sensitive way focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand they have rights over their bodies. This will include understanding boundaries with their peers, friendships and families in all contexts including online. Pupils should know who to report concerns to and seek advice when they suspect or know something is wrong.

6.2. Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection concern. Teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and in his /her deputy in their absence, following the academy's Safeguarding Policy.

7. Parents and Carers

7.1. Parents will be informed about the policy through consultation and it will be shared in the weekly Principal Update in the autumn term of each academic year. This update will also share a half-termly update around the focus for the Pastoral Curriculum each half-term. The policy will also be available to parents through the Academy website.

- 7.2. As part of our whole school approach to RSE, parent information sessions and opportunities for parents to view the materials and resources used in lessons will be available in a timely manner before the teaching of RSE commences for a particular year group. We will notify parents when Relationships and Sex education will be taught during parent events at the beginning of the year and in the Principal Update.
- 7.3. Parents/carers have the right to request that their children are withdrawn from some or all the sex education provision delivered. This does not include any part of the National Curriculum covered in Science, RE or Computer Science and any Relationships or Health education.
- 7.4. Parents/carers wishing to withdraw their children should make an appointment to see the Principal. If, following this meeting, they still wish to withdraw their child, they should put their request in writing, stating which part(s) of the programme they wish to withdraw their children from. This will then be implemented up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.
- 7.5. After this point, the decision to receive sex education falls on the student who can decide if they wish to continue to be withdrawn. If the child chooses to partake in the complete curriculum from this point on the academy will ensure that they receive a catch-up program in their final terms.
- 7.6. The academy will keep detailed records of students who have been withdrawn, the reasons behind withdrawal and the alternative education received by the child during the withdrawal sessions.