



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Policy Title	Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)
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Policy Reference	Based on DfE guidance 2020
Function	For Information and Guidance
Status	Statutory
Audience	Parents, Governors, Headteacher, Teachers, Support Staff, the Department for Education
Ownership / Implementation	The Headteacher and the Governing Body have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
RSE coordinator	Patricia Jones
Review Frequency	3 yearly
Date Approved by Governing Body	Delegated to the teaching and learning committee
Approved by Teaching & Learning Committee	April 2023
Upload to website	Yes
Date for Review	April 2026



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Rationale

“Today’s 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”

“In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy.” (Secretary of state foreword, RSE guidance 2021)

“Effective Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in primary schools can help children build happier, healthier relationships now and in their adult lives and can also contribute to reducing teenage pregnancy” (National Children’s Bureau 2006).

“SRE is a lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings” (Sex Education Forum 2021).

Introduction

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2021, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships and Health Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. In teaching RSE, we must have regard for the guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1986 and our legal duties set out in sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act.

We are not required to provide sex education, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the Science curriculum. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) forms part of the curriculum in Personal, Social and Health Education at Amherst School. Effective relationships and sex education is key in supporting young people through their physical, emotional, social and moral development, enabling them to make informed life choices confidently, and furthering their respect for themselves and others as they move through life.

The statutory guidance in The DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (Sept 2021) states that all schools must provide an up-to-date policy that describes the content and organisation of RSE



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

provided outside the National Curriculum Science Order in their school. The Relationships and Sex Education provided at Amherst School will form a foundation for further work in secondary schools and form a part of the whole school PHSE scheme of work. All of the compulsory subject content will be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It will be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

This policy presents clearly what the school is setting out to achieve in Relationships (Appendix A) Health (Appendix B) and Sex Education (Appendix C) and how it proposes to go about it. It is a working document that was developed using current government statutory guidance, in consultation with the head, PHSE coordinators, staff and governors and provides guidance for staff whilst informing parents and carers.

Desired Outcomes

The purpose of teaching RSE is to ensure that pupils learn about issues in a caring and informed way, which dispels myths that they may have acquired. The school will work towards these aims in partnership with parents and carers.

At Amherst School, we aim:

- to empower pupils to make responsible and well-informed choices about their education and future adult life;
- For pupils to understand the characteristics of positive, respectful and caring relationships including online relationships by exploring and discussing relationship issues
- to promote the importance of family life and people who care for them
- to develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships, and respect the differences between people;
- for pupils to feel informed about the emotional and physical changes of puberty and know how to seek support;
- to promote the importance of self respect for their bodies and the importance of sexual activity being within a committed, long term and loving relationship;
- to answer and discuss moral questions;
- for pupils to feel better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- for pupils to have the skills to avoid being pressured into risk-taking behaviour; particularly with reference to extreme and exaggerated online behaviours
- for pupils to understand how the law applies to sexual behaviours and what the law allows and does not allow.



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

- for pupils to know who in school they can ask for help and support from if they have concerns about any aspect of their lives;

Delivering Relationships, Health and Sex Education

RSE is taught through a developmental scheme of work to all pupils across Key Stage 2, and links to other aspects of PSHE education to fully equip the pupils with the skills and attitudes necessary for them to benefit effectively from sex and relationships education. Amherst school has written its own bespoke PHSE curriculum based around the six core values of: Trust, Kindness, Determination, Politeness, Fairness and Cooperation. The scheme of work has been written as a spiral curriculum (every topic taught and delivered to all year groups depending upon their age) and the RSE objectives form part of that curriculum. The school is supported by use of the PHSE association resources, SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) Program, Go Givers resources and BBC resources.

The BBC video (Focus on Growing Up) and worksheets will form the main teaching resources for the delivery of this topic in Years 5 and 6. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts (Yr 4), the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty Yr 5) and reproduction in some plants and animals.(Yr 5) They are taught about puberty, menstruation and changes to their body at the end of Year 5 and again at the end of Year 6. Human reproduction is taught to Year 6 pupils only. We also teach some RSE content through Science where we feel that it contributes significantly to a pupil's knowledge and understanding of their own body and how it is changing and developing.

The PHSE health education curriculum focuses on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing and how these two are intrinsically linked, and teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health. This includes teaching about the importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, enjoying hobbies, being part of a community and spending time outside. Health education will focus on a range of emotions pupils will experience, articulating how they feel and judging what are appropriate and proportionate responses to situations. Teachers will discuss how to support their own and others' mental wellbeing and signpost children to people who can help them. Pupils will be taught about the benefits of rationing time spent online and the risks of excessive use of electronic devices. Pupils are taught why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions and how to manage common difficulties encountered online. (See Appendix B)

Most of the teaching of RSE will be done by the class teachers, as they will have established a positive working relationship with the pupils. The more discrete topics, taught in Year 5 & 6 at the end of the Summer Term about Puberty, Sex and Relationships, will be taught in single sex groups with two adults present in each classroom. Teachers will respond sensitively to the children's questions and provide anonymous question boxes for the children to put in any questions they may have on the topic. The teachers will then make a carefully considered judgment about which



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

questions are age appropriate to answer in school and reinforce with the children the importance of finding a trusted adult at home to talk to after these sessions.

Positive Climate for Learning in all classrooms

Ground Rules:

- Teachers develop a set of ground rules to create a safe environment in which no one feels embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils;
- Teachers will avoid embarrassment and protect pupils' privacy by always de-personalising discussions;
- Children will be enabled to write anonymous questions to put in a box in order to avoid embarrassment and ensure this part of their learning is as open as possible.
- Teachers will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting;
- If a question is too personal, the teacher will remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support the teacher can refer them to the appropriate person such as, parent, the school counsellor, helpline or an outside agency or service.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher will acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk to the pupil later and remind them to find a trusted adult at home, if concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, the teacher will follow the school's child protection procedures.

Cross curricular links

All curriculum areas make a contribution to RSE. Some subjects make a clear contribution, such as Science and PSHE, while other subjects make a less obvious, but important, contribution, such as:

- Literacy – discussion of specific relationships and moral dilemmas
- R.E. – discussion of family and marriage
- History and Geography – discussion of wider social issues
- Art and Music – discussion of feelings and emotions within relationships

Parents and Relationships and Sex Education

As a school we wish to build on what pupils learn at home and we are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters.

We appreciate the sensitivity and concerns some parents may feel towards RSE and therefore, we invite parents to view the materials we use in school prior to the delivery with the pupils. We believe that for the pupils to achieve the desired objectives, a positive and united relationship must continue to exist between home and school and we would encourage discussion about this area of the curriculum at home.



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents/carers about the school's RSE policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents/carers may have about RSE of their child;
- take seriously any issues that parents/carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school;
- offer opportunities for parents/carers to give feedback on the RSE curriculum and delivery
- inform parents/ carers about the best practice known with regard to RSE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents/carers give to pupils at home.

Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships and Health Education but do have the right to withdraw their children from that part of the RSE programme that teaches sex education (though not from those elements taught through Science).

Parents/carers who wish to withdraw their children from any aspect of RSE programme should meet with the Headteacher to discuss their concerns. Should, after discussion, parent/carers still wish to withdraw their child, they must submit a letter in writing prior to the commencement of the RSE programme. The school will seek to address any parental concern sensitively. A formal request to withdraw a pupil from the RSE programme by their parents will be respected by the school.

Differentiation and Additional Educational Needs

The school will ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEND) receive relationships and sex education. However, we recognise that all pupils will have varied life experiences and a range of feelings and attitudes. Lessons will allow all perceptions to be articulated, and all contributions will be valued and respected.

Relationships and sex education will help all pupils to understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives. Some parents of children with SEND may find it difficult to accept their children's developing sexuality. Some pupils will be more confused about what is acceptable public behaviour. These children will be given more help to develop skills to reduce the risks of being abused and exploited, and to learn what sorts of behaviour are, and are not, acceptable.

Teachers may need to be more explicit and plan work in different ways and using different resources in order to meet the individual needs of children with SEND or learning difficulties. The school will take care not to marginalise relationship and sex education. Teaching points will be conveyed using language that is accessible to the pupils.

Entitlement and Equality of Opportunity



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Amherst School is committed to working towards equal opportunities in all areas of school life. We aim to avoid stereotyping and believe that pupils' religious beliefs and cultural differences should also be respected. All pupils, regardless of their developing sexuality, are entitled to an RSE Curriculum that is relevant to their age group and sensitive to their needs. Teachers should be aware that for some children the RSE that they receive at school will be the main education they receive.

The sex education elements of the National Curriculum Science Order are mandatory for all pupils of primary and secondary school age. These cover anatomy, puberty and the biological aspects of sexual reproduction.

Other elements of PSHE, including RSE, are non-statutory, but ensure pupils explore the skills, values and attitudes that are essential to lead a positive and healthy lifestyle.

Within the context of healthy mutual relationships, it seeks to encourage respect for self, respect for others and the responsibility for one's own actions.

Confidentiality:

Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and with consideration for the need for confidentiality. But should issues of disclosure regarding inappropriate sexual behaviour/ activity arise, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. The teacher or teachers will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. In such cases, procedures as laid down in the Policy for Child Protection will be followed.

Monitoring and Review:

Monitoring and evaluation are the keys to successful school improvement. All members of staff, in partnership with the governing body, share responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The implementation of this policy will be monitored and its outcomes will feed into the process of review and evaluation. Any findings and recommendations will be submitted to the Governors of Amherst School Academy Trust, as necessary, to update this policy statement.

Signed: (Chair of Governors) Date:



Appendix A- statutory

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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 family life, 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 others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.• that marriage¹³ represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two 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.
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Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

<p>Caring friendships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.
<p>Respectful relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • the conventions of courtesy and manners. • the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • 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 those in positions of authority.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. • the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Online relationships	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.• 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, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.• 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.
Being safe	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).• 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) whom they do not know.• how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.• how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.• how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.• where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Appendix B- statutory

By the end of primary school:

Mental wellbeing	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.• that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.• how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.• the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.• simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.• isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.• that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.• where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).• it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.
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Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Internet safety and harms	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.• about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.• how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.• why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.• that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.• how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.• where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.
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Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Physical health and fitness	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.• the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.• the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).• how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.
Healthy eating	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).• the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.• the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Health and prevention	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. • about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. • about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. • about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing. • the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.
Basic first aid	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary. • concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

Changing adolescent body	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. • about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.
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Appendix C (non-statutory Sex Education)

Sex Education		<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How a baby is conceived • that this usually takes place inside the female body • that sexual intercourse takes place between two consenting adults • That the legal age for consent in the UK is 16 • how a baby develops inside the uterus • how a baby is born
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Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• that all babies are unique and special and require love and commitment
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