



RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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Aims

- 1 Alderbrook School (the academy) is firmly committed to the Every Child Matters agenda; that every young person has the right to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. The academy will provide carefully planned provision across both Key Stages 3 and 4 and 5 for the personal and social development of our students within an ethos that supports learning.
- 2 This policy is intended to support our curriculum provision, which includes PSHCE, science and RE as well as guiding the whole school community in talking about, teaching and learning about relationships and sex at Alderbrook School.
- 3 The general purpose of RSE at Alderbrook is:
 - 3.1 To increase understanding and provide accurate information about sex related issues.
 - 3.2 To dispel myths.
 - 3.3 To explore a range of attitudes and values towards sex related issues and help young people to reach their own, informed opinions and, ultimately, develop healthier behaviours
 - 3.4 To develop a sense of care and mutual respect for others.
 - 3.5 To increase young peoples' self-esteem.
 - 3.6 To develop personal, social and emotional skills relevant to all relationships and to sexual behaviour and situations, e.g. communication, risk assessment and management, managing relationships, decision making, assertiveness, conflict management, helping others, seeking help and accessing and using services.
- 4 For the purposes of this policy, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is defined as "learning about sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships, sexual health and ourselves." (Sex Education Forum, www.sexeducationforum.org.uk)

Moral and Values Framework

- 5 The whole school community has taken part in a consultation process to identify the values that we believe underpin all teaching and learning about relationships and sex at Alderbrook School. This consultation process was driven by the RSE task group and included the selection of our underpinning values and the exploration of what these values might look like in practice. These values, together with what they mean to us, are outlined below.

Knowledge and Understanding

- 6 Up to date, correct information, based upon the age, maturity and needs of groups and individuals must be used to enable children and young people to stay safe and make informed choices and decisions.

Respect

- 7 Negotiated ground-rules will ensure that the climate for learning is respectful of individuals/groups and their opinions, beliefs and choices (e.g. different types of relationships).

8 Appropriate and negotiated language will be used in RSE focussed lessons in year 9 PSHCE through the Relationships unit, in Science lessons and through related Life Ready Days.

Choice

- 9 All individuals have a right to choose (e.g. different relationships, a right to delay sexual activity).
- 10 RSE will explore attitudes and values and develop skills that will enable children and young people to use their knowledge and understanding to make informed choices.
- 11 All choices carry responsibilities and consequences.

Caring

- 12 Fulfilling relationships are based upon love, care, empathy and mutual respect.
- 13 Questions will be responded to with care, attention and thought.
- 14 In caring for our students, networks of support inside and outside of school are clearly identified and the information is readily available at all times.

Rights and Responsibilities

- 15 All students have the right to be given up to date, correct information in response to any questions that they may ask.
- 16 Everybody has the right to be individual and to make their own choices, whilst recognising that those choices carry consequences.
- 17 We all have the responsibility to keep others, and ourselves physically and emotionally safe within our relationships.

Safety and Trust

- 18 RSE will always be delivered within a safe learning environment, underpinned by negotiated ground-rules.
- 19 Safety of oneself and others within relationships will always be promoted, including safe sexual practice and assessment and management of risk
- 20 An emphasis upon feelings/emotions of oneself and others is integral to learning about fulfilling relationships and sex.
- 21 Students will be given opportunities to consider people they can trust to give them support (e.g. parents, staff, young people's health clinics).
- 22 School staff (including the principal first aider) can never guarantee confidentiality and may have to refer issues where students are at risk (see Child Protection Policy).
- 23 The school nurse (employed by Solihull PCT) can offer confidentiality to students on a one to one basis, outside of the classroom and in line with Fraser guidelines.

Confidentiality

- 24 All schools are required by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to 'promote the well-being of students at the school'. We are committed to the well-being of our students and we therefore actively signpost confidential support services that can be accessed by our students.

- 25 In the classroom, the aim is to strike a balance between helping students to feel respected, safe and able to participate fully and openly while still protecting privacy and safeguarding welfare.
- 26 Effective teaching and learning in PSHCE / RSE actively encourages students to share thoughts and voice opinions, so it is important to establish boundaries and clarify with students at the outset what will happen to any personal information they might disclose in the classroom.
- 27 Within school, the following protocols must be followed
- 27.1 Staff should never promise unconditional or absolute confidentiality
- 27.2 Ground rules should be agreed in the classroom to support a safe learning environment,
- 27.3 It should be made explicit to students that staff have a duty to protect young people from serious harm. In such circumstances, staff will need to talk to another professional about a disclosure. In the first instance, names should not be shared with that other professional in order to maintain confidentiality.
- 27.4 Young people will always be informed of the intention / requirement to share this information and their consent will be sought.
- 27.5 Sharing information without consent is only recommended if it is in the child's best interests to do so and there is a clear risk of significant harm to the young person or to others.' Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)
- 27.6 All sexual activity involving under 13s must be reported to the Designated Member of Staff (DMS) for Child Protection who will fully document discussions, including detailed reasons where a decision is made not to share information.
- 27.7 There is no legal requirement to report sexual activity between 13-15 year olds. Although the age of consent remains at 16, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 was never intended to criminalise sexual activity between consenting young people of this age.
- 27.8 All disclosures of sexual activity involving 13-15 year olds must be discussed with the DMS for Child Protection. In the first instance, in order to maintain confidentiality, names should not be shared with the DMS.
- 27.9 Sexual activity involving 16-17 year olds is unlikely to involve an offence. Discussion with the DMS and subsequent action may be appropriate if staff suspect serious harm or the risk of serious harm. It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16- or 17-year-old if they hold a position of trust or authority in relationship to them.

Sensitive issues

- 28 As a school community, the academy has identified the following topics as sensitive:

Issues addressed within the taught programme	Sensitive topics that may arise
Physical and emotional changes during puberty	Pornography
Managing changing relationships with family and friends	Rape
Physical and sexual relationships	Paedophilia

Contraception	Emergency contraception
Assessing risks, sexual activity	Pornography, rape
Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDs	Stereotypes
Parenting	Teenage parents
Sexuality & Gender	Homosexuality Transgender
Pregnancy and abortion	
Loss and change, eg divorce, bereavement (RE)	
Marriage	
Masturbation	

29 In order to de-sensitise some of these issues and to enable discussions to take place, staff should make use of:

- Ground rules
- Our moral and values framework
- Distancing techniques e.g. create a character, story boarding
- Specialist support where appropriate e.g. school nurse, Theatre in Health
- Education
- Regular CPD opportunities to attend and to discuss issues openly

Answering difficult questions

30 In answering questions, all staff must respond within the agreed values framework as outlined above. Ground rules, negotiated and agreed with students at the outset, should ensure that a climate of trust is created with clear boundaries, ensuring that neither staff nor students ask personal questions.

Bullying and homophobic/Transgender bullying

31 Bullying is taken seriously at Alderbrook School and our approach to dealing with the issues is detailed in our Anti-bullying policy. Evidence of homophobic/Transgender bullying suggests that young people who are, or who are perceived to be gay, lesbian or Transgender face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. It is also the form of bullying that is least likely to be self-reported. We have a legal duty to ensure that homophobic bullying is dealt with (Education and Inspections Act 2006).

32 Alderbrook School will not tolerate the use of homophobic language by adults or young people, and will invoke anti-bullying procedures appropriately to promote equalities and diversity.

Use of outside agencies

33 Delivery of formal RSE is the responsibility of staff teaching PSHCE within the PSHCE team, led by a specialist Healthy School Coordinator. However, we recognise that it is good practice to include outside agencies in the delivery where appropriate. The school nurse, in particular, has a key role in supporting the RSE programme in partnership with school staff.

34 Any supporting agencies deemed appropriate by the Healthy School Coordinator must:

- work within the school's RSE policy at all times, including our values framework and confidentiality protocols
- work in partnership with school staff, using a partnership agreement
- add significantly to the learning experience for our students e.g. specialist health knowledge

Parental Right to withdraw

- 35 Parents have the right to withdraw their children from aspects of RSE that go beyond statutory National Curriculum orders for science. Parental views and rights will always be respected. Any parents who wish to discuss the possibility of withdrawal from RSE are asked, in the first instance, to contact the Head Teacher. The PSHCED Coordinator is happy to discuss aspects of our RSE provision with parents.
- 36 Where students are withdrawn from planned RSE, they will be accommodated in an alternative venue. However, they may not be withdrawn from other lessons or areas of school life where discussion around relationships and sex education could arise spontaneously.

Link to policy and guidance

- 37 This policy has been drawn up with reference to:
- DfE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000)
 - Sex and Relationships Education Guidance, Solihull (2005)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)
 - Alderbrook School's Child Protection Policy
 - Alderbrook's Anti-bullying Policy

Consultation

- 38 This policy has been devised through consultation with the whole school community. An RSE working party was established consisting of parents, governors, teaching staff, school nurse and matron. Consultation involved questionnaires to parents and students and CPD opportunities for staff. The Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire, used biannually, continues to inform our policy and practice.
- 39 Staff and students have the opportunity after each unit of work to evaluate the provision. Changes may be made to ensure that the provision continues to meet the needs of our school community.
- 40 As a result of the consultation process, following parental wishes, letters are sent to parents prior to their child beginning a unit of learning about RSE.

Learning

- 41 Our curriculum for Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) has planned RSE learning opportunities across Key Stages 3 & 4. Clear objectives and outcomes are identified to secure the development of personal skills, knowledge and understanding and the exploration of attitudes and values pertinent to RSE.
- 42 We are aware that RSE is not fully contained within PSHCE. Other subjects, along with the pastoral system and the positive ethos of the school, make a valuable contribution to the learning of our students.

Roles and Responsibilities / Monitoring and Evaluation

- 43 Putting this policy into practice is the responsibility of all members of the Alderbrook school community in their daily contact with students. The governing body, as well as the Head Teacher, have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the policy is adhered to. The PSHCE Co-ordinator at Alderbrook is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of RSE. This is to be achieved through lesson observations, focussed discussions with staff and with students, assessment strategies, scrutiny of annotated planning and evaluations by staff and by students. Subsequently, this will feed into the planning cycle to enhance provision and to meet the needs of young people.

Resources

- 44 Resources are clearly identified within schemes of work. Those that are selected should be in line with our moral and values framework, up to date and up to date and non-discriminatory. The curriculum is mapped against the PSHCE Association Programme of Study Objectives.
- 45 Any other resources not highlighted within the scheme of work must be approved by the PSHCE Coordinator. Where necessary, the advice of governors will be sought.