

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

2025 – 2026



Sedgehill Academy

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Part of United Learning

Owner	Clare Cassidy
Date Ratified by Governing Body	March 2025
Next Review Date	March 2026

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

From September 2020, pupils receiving secondary education must be taught Relationships and Sex Education, under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.

Introduction

Relationships and Sex Education at Sedgehill Academy builds upon the foundation of what is covered at Primary schools. It focuses on giving young people the information they need to develop safe, healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds: supportive family relationships, good friendships, good colleagues, successful marriages or civil partnerships or other types of committed relationship. It also supports students' well-being and helps them make informed choices about their lives, as well as understand their own mental and physical health.

We believe it is important that pupils understand how good relationships, underpinned by respectful behaviours, can have a positive impact on their mental wellbeing, and that they can identify when relationships are not right or are harmful (both on and offline), and how such situations can be handled.

Relationships and Sex Education is delivered in a balanced and sensitive manner, within a moral and caring framework. This is intended to complement and support the role of parents and carers. Our programme will help students develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives. It will play an important role, alongside other aspects of the curriculum and Academy life, in helping students deal with difficult moral and social questions. Relationships and Sex Education is designed to enable our students to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Its objective is to enable pupils to learn about:

- (i) families and people who care for them, including the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children,
- (ii) forming and maintaining caring relationships,
- (iii) the characteristics of healthy and respectful relationships, including online,
- (iv) how relationships may affect physical and mental health and wellbeing, and how to ensure they are safe, and
- (v) intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

Relationships and sex education will only use teaching and materials which are appropriate to the age and the religious background of the pupils receiving it.

Parental, staff and student involvement regarding the policy

The school will consult with parents and staff on the formation of the policy, and any changes made to it when it is reviewed, which will be at least annually. This will help to limit the risk of any formal complaints.

We will also consult our students on the policy and make changes when it is reviewed.

Parental right to withdraw children

The Sex and Relationship Policy acknowledges the right of parents to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education provided (except from sex education taught under the science curriculum), but not from the relationships education.

In considering such a request, Sedgehill will follow the process below:

- The Principal will discuss with the parent (and, if appropriate, the child) to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the content that will be covered.
- The Principal will discuss with the parent the benefits of the child receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child, including social or emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing from their peers what was covered (and having that content channelled through a child's voice rather than a teacher's).
- Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. safeguarding concerns), the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.
- For the vast majority of pupils with SEND, their SEND should not be a consideration in deciding whether to grant a parental request. However, we acknowledge there may be exceptional circumstances where the Principal will want to take a pupil's SEND into account when making this decision.

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



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Teaching and Learning Objectives

The content covered by Relationships and Sex Education is set out below:

Relationships and Sex Education

Sedgehill Academy will continue to develop pupils' knowledge on topics specified for primary schools and in addition cover the following content by the end of Year 11.

Families	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.▪ How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.▪ What marriage and civil partnerships are, including their legal status e.g. that marriage and civil partnerships carry legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.▪ Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.▪ The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.▪ The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to the raising of children.▪ How to: determine whether peers, 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	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (both on and offline) including: trust, respect, honesty, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.▪ 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).▪ 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 tolerance and respect to others and others' beliefs, including people in positions of authority.▪ About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.▪ That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.▪ What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.▪ 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.



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Online / media	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply online and offline. ▪ 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. ▪ Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them. ▪ What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. ▪ The impact of viewing harmful content. ▪ That specifically sexually explicit material often 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. ▪ That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail. ▪ How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
Being Safe	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. ▪ How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (on and offline).
Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. ▪ 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. ▪ The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women. ▪ That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others. ▪ That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. ▪ The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices and options available. ▪ The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. ▪ 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). ▪ 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.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. ▪ How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour. ▪ How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.
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Health Education: Physical Health and Wellbeing

Sedgehill Academy continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as require and in addition cover the following content by the end of Year 11.

Mental wellbeing	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary. ▪ That happiness is linked to being connected to others. ▪ How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing issues. ▪ Common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression). ▪ How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health. ▪ The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
Internet safety and harms	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online through setting unrealistic expectations for body image, how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships (including social media), the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online. ▪ How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or get support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
Physical health and fitness	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress. ▪ The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardio-vascular ill-health. ▪ Facts about wider issues including blood, organ and stem cell donation.
Healthy eating	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay, eating disorders and cancer.



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Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The facts about legal substances and illegal substances, including drug-taking, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions. ▪ The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances. ▪ The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes (relatively) safe alcohol consumption. ▪ The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency. ▪ Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks. ▪ The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
Health and prevention	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ About personal hygiene, germs (including microbes), the spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics. ▪ About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist. ▪ (Late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination (including screening and immunisation). ▪ The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination. ▪ The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
Basic first aid	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic treatment for common injuries. ▪ Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR. ▪ The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.
Changing adolescent body	<p>Pupils will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing. ▪ The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

The Academy intends that all students shall experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age, ability and development to ensure all students have equal access to the Curriculum.

Some of the content will be taught in PSHE lessons at KS3, across of tutor periods and in assemblies and also in 'drop down days.' It will be taught by qualified teachers, outside speakers and agencies.

The delivery and content is reviewed and monitored regularly in accordance with the guidance. PSHE lessons and the teaching/delivery of the content is monitored through our learning walk and lesson observation cycle. The curriculum and delivery will also be reviewed on an annual basis by the SLT lead



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for PSHE in consultation with parents and students. Content, skills and understanding of the topics will also be evaluated through end of topic quizzes and surveys.

The religious background of all pupils will be taken into account when planning teaching and materials, so that sensitive topics are handled appropriately, and that all relationship education teaching will meet the requirements of equality law.

The delivery and content of all the areas and topics of Relationship and Sex Education will be made accessible to all students including those with SEND through, when necessary, differentiating resources, creating additional resources and using appropriate resources dependent on students' needs. Additional adult support will also be provided if needed and a more individualised approach if required.

Complaints

Any complaints about the relationships and sex education programme should be made in accordance with the school's usual complaints procedure.

Policy Review Date

The policy approved by the Governing Body and will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Governor responsible: Sarah Courtman, Chair



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