HADRIAN LEARNING TRUST

HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

RATIONALE AND ETHOS

This policy covers the Trust's approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We define relationships and sex education as the information, attitudes and skills young people need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.

We believe relationships and sex education is important for our young people and our schools because every person deserves to feel special and loved, in relationships that help them to thrive and flourish. We encourage our young people to have the highest expectations of themselves and others in relationships and to recognise the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing.

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context for family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult.

Our Trust's overarching aim for our young people is that every child will grow into a happy, fulfilled and successful adult.

We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our students and their diverse experiences, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) through high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised.

We ensure RSE fosters gender equality and LGBT+ equality by complying with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. All students are taught the importance of equality and respect, particularly in relation to the protected characteristics, which includes sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. We challenge all forms of discrimination in RSE lessons and in everyday school life.

The intended outcomes of or programme are that students will:

- Know and understand the importance of families, respectful relationships and friendships.
- Understand they have a right to feel special and loved in a relationship and to be treated equally regardless of sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.
- Understand they have a responsibility to treat people equally and with respect and that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- Develop the skills to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of a healthy relationship and the strategies for identifying and managing pressure, including peer pressure, sexual pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- Develop the attributes of honesty, trustworthiness, respectfulness, compassion and consideration for others.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The RSE programme will be led by Andrew Hedley (Assistant Headteacher – Personal Development). It will be taught by staff regularly trained in RSE and PSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme where appropriate).

LEGISLATION (STATUTORY REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE)

From September 2020, all schools are required to teach Relationships Education (in primary schools) and Relationships and Sex Education (in secondary schools).

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of Sex Education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

We will respect parents' request to withdraw their 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, we will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

The RSE policy complements the PSHE, Child Protection, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Online Safety and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Documents that inform the Trust's RSE policy include:

- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education](#)
- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st Century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

CURRICULUM DESIGN

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the key stages. The programme covers:

- Families
- Respectful relationships including friendships
- Online and Media
- Being Safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

The RSE programme delivers lessons where students feel safe and encourages participation using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.

Active learning methods will include the discussion of real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of students including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.

Students will also be given the opportunity to reflect on values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex, and nurtures respect for different views.

The curriculum is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion. It also incudes learning about how to get help from sources such as the school nurse, the sexual health drop-in (at QEHS) and other health and advice services including reliable information online.

High quality resources will support our RSE provision and will be regularly reviewed by staff and students. Students' views about RSE will be sought so that teaching will be relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

Students will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress by completing evaluations at the end of each unit.

Assessment in RSE will take the include a combination of teacher assessment and pupil self and peer assessment. The model of assessment that is most meaningful in RSE education is ipsative assessment. Ipsative assessment compares where a pupil is at the end of a lesson or series of lessons against where they were before the lesson(s). Examples used in RSE include:

- Baseline assessments to gauge prior knowledge and understanding
- Ask-it-basket end of lesson or unit question / summary of key messages
- Mind-map / Spider diagram
- Questionnaire
- Explain to an alien
- Washing line
- Card sort / diamond 9
- Discussion

Further details can be found here for HMS and here for QEHS

SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

A safe learning environment helps students to share feelings, explore values and attitudes, express opinions and consider those of others, without attracting negative feedback. As well as encouraging more open discussion, it also helps to ensure that teachers are not anxious about unexpected disclosures or comments and that pupils are not put on the spot, upset or traumatised.

To ensure a safe learning environment, staff will:

- work with students to establish ground rules about how they will behave towards each other in discussion
- provide opportunities for students to discuss issues in small groups as well as sharing views with the whole class
- make 'ask-it-baskets' available in which students can place anonymous questions or concerns

- provide access to balanced information and differing views to help students clarify their own opinions (whilst making clear that behaviours such as racism, homophobia, bi-phobia, transphobia, discrimination and bullying are never acceptable in any form)
- be cautious about expressing their own views, bearing in mind that they are in an influential position and must work within the school's values, policies and the law
- be sensitive to the needs and experiences of individuals, as some students may have direct experience of some of the issues
- always work within the school's policies on safeguarding and confidentiality (and ensure that pupils understand school policies on disclosure of confidential information and following up concerns in a more appropriate setting outside lessons)
- link PSHE education into the whole-school approach to supporting student wellbeing
- make students aware of reliable sources of support both inside and outside the school

Distancing techniques such as stories, scenarios, clips from TV programmes or case studies can provide fictional characters and storylines that stimulate discussion whilst 'de-personalising' discussions. This allows students to engage more objectively with the lesson content.

SAFEGUARDING

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 issue. In this event, teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and in their absence their deputy.

Visitors and external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to comply with the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

The RSE policy with be available to parents via the schools' websites. Parents / Carers will be able to see when RSE will be taught by referring to the schools' websites.

Student voice will be used to review and adapt out RSE programme to match the different needs of students through end of topic evaluations, student panels and quality of education reviews.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through end of topic reviews, departmental meetings and quality of education reviews.

Students will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons by completing online surveys and through the 'ask-it-basket'.

RSE POLICY REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed on 15/09/24

This will ensure that it continues to meet the needs of students, staff and parents and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance.