

# Health, Relationships and Sex Education Policy



**The Stour Academy Trust**  
*Together on a journey to excellence*

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## **Introduction**

The DfE recognise that children and young people today are 'growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline.' Therefore, they need to learn how to create and sustain safe and healthy relationships and how to manage their personal, academic and social lives in a positive way.

Health and Relationships Education will be compulsory in all primary schools in England. Pupils are offered a balanced programme that is age and developmentally appropriate. It is taught in a sensitive and respectful manner and differentiated accordingly. With regards to Sex Education, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the lessons provided, but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction as required by the National Curriculum for Science.

## **Rationale**

This policy will enable us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in society. To establish the general ethos of the school, it should be read in conjunction with the following policies: SEND; Child Protection; Online Safety; Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Policy and the Home-School Contract.

The school will manage and promote pupils personal, social, health and emotional education alongside the aims set out below:

## **Aims**

The purpose of teaching HRSE is to ensure that children learn about all types of on and offline relationships, personal health and sex in a caring and informed way, which dispels myths that they may have acquired and enables them to make future choices well

We aim:

- To promote healthy relationships and to teach about the different types of healthy relationship, friendships and communities, both on and offline;
- To develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships, and respect the differences between people;
- To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty (including menstruation) and the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults.
- To teach how children can look after their bodies, including their mental wellbeing, internet safety and harms, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs, alcohol and tobacco and self-regulation of emotions.
- For children to know how they can protect themselves and where to ask for help and support;
- To empower children to make informed choices about their education and future adult life;
- Respect for their bodies and the importance of sexual activity being within a committed, long term and loving relationship;
- The importance of a caring and supportive family life, and that families may be made up of different adults who are significant;
- To ask and answer moral questions;
- To equip children to recognise unhealthy relationships, and where they can seek advice if they are worried.

We will work towards these aims in partnership with parents.

**Inclusion and differentiated learning:**

We ensure HRSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequence of discrimination, teasing, bullying, and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), and use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help.

**Day to day application of policy:**

Health, Relationships and Sex Education as part of the PHSE curriculum can be approached in a variety of ways. In circle time we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of the body, how these work, and we explain to them what will happen to their bodies during puberty. A main part of our teaching is to encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

In science lessons in both key stages, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the National Curriculum. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

We liaise with the Local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons and on occasion the school nurse may come in to talk to the children. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children and within the ethos of each school.

While sex education in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work. In particular, we teach sex education in the belief that:

- sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity;
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect.

**The Role of Parents**

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children. Parents and carers have the most significant influence on their child's development, growth, maturity and the ability to form healthy relationships. Health and Relationships education is a statutory requirement for Primary Schools and parents cannot withdraw their children from this aspect. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the elements of sex education that are taught through PSHE (though not from those elements taught through Science). Parents/carers who wish to withdraw their children from this aspect of SRE should discuss this with the Headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the

programme they do not want their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of the parents in this regard. However, we believe that the safe environment of the classroom is the best place for such a curriculum to be delivered, therefore before a child is withdrawn, we would welcome a discussion with parents to ensure there are no detrimental effects to the child.

We appreciate the sensitivity and concerns some parents may feel towards HRSE and, therefore, we invite parents to see the materials we use in the school. We believe that for the children 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.

In promoting this objective we:

- Inform parents/carers about the school's HRSE policy and practice;
- Answer any questions that parents/carers may have about HRSE of their child;
- Take seriously any issues that parents/ carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for HRSE in the school;
- Encourage parents/carers to be involved in reviewing the School's Policy and making modifications as necessary;
- Inform parents/carers about the key messages that parents/carers give to children at home.

### **Managing Questions and Sensitive Issues**

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE, however teachers promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. They are aware that views around RSE are varied, therefore lessons are delivered without bias. Lessons are presented using a variety of views and beliefs enabling children to make their own informed opinions whilst respecting those of others. Teachers use their skill and discretion when answering questions according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s). They refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned.

### **Confidentiality**

The teacher delivers health, relationships and sex education lessons throughout the school year as part of a programme of PSHE. These lessons are conducted in a sensitive manner and in complete confidence.

However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency. If teachers have concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the Headteacher. The Head will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals.

(See also Child Protection Policy)

### **The Role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and that they work within this framework.

The Headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to the Board of Directors, when requested, on its effectiveness.