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Relationship and Sex Education Policy

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Coventry School Foundation's Relationships and Sex Education Policy

RATIONALE AND ETHOS

This policy covers our Foundation approach to the guidance as laid out in the DfE, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) 2020 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>). It was produced by the Pastoral Deputy Heads of King Henry VIII School, Dr Cuthbert and Bablake School, Mrs Press, through consultation with the School Governors with responsibility for Safeguarding, relevant leads at each Junior School setting and the Foundation's HR manager.

We believe Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is important for our pupils and our schools because through incorporating it within our curriculum, we put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online.

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context to developing healthy and safe relationships. We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND); recognising that pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND.

Lessons will be undertaken by high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised, as a starting point to ensure accessibility. We ensure RSE fosters gender equality and LGBTQ+ equality by ensuring that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect.

'Pupils should be able to understand the world in which they are growing up, which means understanding that some people are LGBTQ+, that this should be respected in British Society, and that the law affords them and their relationships recognition and protections'
(DfE, 2019b)

LEGISLATION (STATUTORY REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE)

Revised Department for Education statutory guidance will state that from 2020, all schools must deliver relationships education (in primary schools) and relationships and sex education (in secondary schools). This is in response to the identified risks children and young people may face through their increased online activities and the need to support them to be safe and healthy, and manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Coventry School Foundation (CSF) is responding positively to Government guidelines in laying down and conveying to parents the nature of its Relationship and Sex Education policy, its content and methods of delivery and monitoring its future development. The content for both relationships education (in primary schools) and relationships and sex education (in secondary schools) can be found in full in Appendix A&B at the end of this policy document.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS: RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

DfE guidance states, *'it will be for Primary Schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils'*.

As a Foundation, we aim to prepare our pupils for puberty by teaching about sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene, whilst also helping pupils to develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy. It is our belief that the teaching of some aspects of sex education will enable a smooth transition phase to secondary schooling in support of pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development. Parents should be assured that an annual review of policy enables suitable adaptations tailored to the age and physical maturity of each cohort. Ensuring that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for Science.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS: RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

Current regulations and guidance from the Department for Education state that Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in all secondary schools (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2020)

Documents that inform the Coventry Foundation's RSE policy include:

- 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 (2019)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2018)
- DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education in England: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers. (2019a) (2019b)

Specific guidelines related to Sex Education from the 1993 Education Act and the Amendments added since 1994, (please see DfEE Circular 5/94), including Relationship and Sex Education (RSE 2000):

- That all students should be offered the opportunity of receiving a comprehensive, well planned programme of relationship and sex education during their school careers;
- That the school curriculum should be one which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society';

- That this programme prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- That it includes education on HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases;
- That relationship and sex education “must be provided in such a manner as to encourage young people to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life”;
- That the parents of a student “may, if they wish, withdraw that student from all or part of the relationship and sex education provided”. They should understand how to exercise this right;
- That “the teaching offered by schools should be complementary and supportive to the role of parents and should have regard to parents’ views about its content and presentation”;
- That in defining the purpose and content of relationship and sex education, schools should aim to offer balanced and factual information, acknowledging the major moral and ethical issues involved;
- That Governors have available a written policy on Relationship and Sex Education for parents and convey the content and methods to be used in any aspect of such teaching.

Whilst these provisions are at present only legally binding on maintained schools, independent schools like ourselves are developing their relationship and sex education policies as a matter of good practice following these guidelines.

This Relationship and Sex Education Policy is available to all parents on request and opportunities will be made during the academic year to discuss material and teaching methods used in Relationship and Sex Education. Particular attention and decisions are taken with regards to parents from some religious groups and ethnic minorities who may not feel comfortable in dealing with the subject publicly.

The focus in Prep School will involve teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. As previously stated, it will also include some aspects of sex education to enable a smooth transition phase to secondary schooling in support of pupils’ ongoing emotional and physical development.

Broad outcomes at Prep School include:

- Prepare children for all types of relationships that they may experience by living in modern Britain.
- Enable children to reflect upon different relationships, those who care for them, the importance of family life, respect for others and their views,
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene,
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy,
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, including respect for their own bodies.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Scientifically understand the way humans reproduce.
- Know what they should do if they are worried about any matters relating to their bodies.

For a full listing of related topics please refer to Appendix A.

Curriculum development during Senior School will enable a continuation of key principles regarding the characteristics of positive relationships whilst also ensuring pupils receive a comprehensive, well planned programme of sex education.

Broad outcomes at Senior School include:

- Prepare children for all types of relationships that they may experience by living in modern Britain.
- Enable children to reflect upon different relationships, those who care for them, the importance of family life, respect for others and their views,
- Know and understand that they should have regard for moral considerations and the value of family life.
- Understand they have a responsibility to apply what they have learned to the relationships they develop as teenagers and eventually as adults.

For a full listing of related topics please refer to Appendix B

TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities differ across the CSF but in each school, there is a PSHE/Life Choices lead. The programme is taught by pastoral staff as well as other selected members of staff, including the expertise of the School Nurse and in some instances, external agencies with specific expertise on these matters.

It is also the lead's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given suitable training, so they can teach about relationships and sex effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

TEACHING

The RSE programme is an integral part of the whole school PSHE/Life Choices education provision and will cover healthy and safe relationships and sexual health. Our RSE programme is inclusive of all faiths and sexual orientations. We will ensure RSE is matched to the needs of our pupils by ensuring that all lessons are age appropriate.

Care is taken to ensure that the RSE education programme is presented by means of various techniques and strategies such as videos, discussions, visiting speakers as well as formal written information. In this way it is intended that children of all abilities will be able to draw important information and insights in this area.

Learning about relationships and sex education in PSHE/Life Choices education lessons will link to/complement learning in curriculum subjects such as Biology. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress, by undertaking discussions with their peers and Form Tutors within the PSHE/Life Choices lessons. An overview of the learning in each year group can be found on the school website.

In relation to the above, the aim for PSHE/Life Choices education is to provide pupils with:

- Accurate, balanced and relevant knowledge;
- Opportunities to turn that knowledge into personal understanding;

- Opportunities to explore, clarify and if necessary, challenge, their own and others' values, attitudes, beliefs, rights and responsibilities;
- The skills, language and strategies they need in order to live healthy, safe, fulfilling, responsible and balanced lives;
- Opportunities to develop positive personal attributes such as resilience, self-confidence, self-esteem, and empathy.

SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

We will ensure a safe learning environment by ensuring all pupils are made aware of the objectives for each PSHE/Life Choices lesson. Teachers and pupils will agree ground rules at the start of the academic year. Pupils will be reminded of the ground rules for safe discussions at the start of all PSHE/Life Choices lessons with RSE content. Sensitive issues will be handled initially by the Form Tutor, supported by the Head of Year, Head of PSHE/Life Choices and if necessary, Pastoral Deputy Head. Pupils will be able to raise questions anonymously if needed. Each school has their own arrangements for this to take place.

SAFEGUARDING

Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner.

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. If a disclosure is made, the teacher will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and in his/her absence an Assistant DSL. The DSL will then deal with the matter as set out in our [CSF Safeguarding Policy](#). Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to follow the protocol for visiting speakers also laid out in the Coventry School's Foundation Child Protection policy.

PARENTS AND CARERS

We are committed to working with parents and carers and welcome their involvement with the RSE programme. Should parents wish to view teaching material contact can be made with the Head of PSHE/Life Choices as listed on the school website.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from RSE content that is not part of statutory National Curriculum Science, however we would strongly encourage parents/carers to look carefully at the curriculum before they make an informed decision. In such circumstances the school would hope to discuss any concerns to see if fears could be allayed. Where children are withdrawn, they will be given a self-study lesson under indirect supervision.; parents/carers will also be given access to the lesson content.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

At both primary and secondary level, the parental right to withdraw their child/children from taught RSE lessons will be respected. However, we will ensure that all parents have complete access to the RSE curriculum to make an informed decision and we strongly encourage any parent to arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns.

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 will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Headteacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through discussions with the PSHE/Life Choices lead. Pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons by communicating with their Form Tutors. Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities through pupil surveys and lesson feedback.

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.

Date: March 2021

Policy to be reviewed: March 2022

Appendix A: Primary Schools Relationships Education (p. 20-22 DfE, RSE Statutory Guidance)

By the end of primary school:

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| 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. |
| Caring friendships | <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. |
| Respectful relationships | <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. |

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| | <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. |
| 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. |

Appendix B: Secondary Schools Relationships and Sex Education (p. 27-29 DfE, RSE Statutory Guidance)

By the end of secondary school:

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

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| <p>Families</p> | <p>Pupils should 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 is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries 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 raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting. • how to: determine whether other children, 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. |
| <p>Respectful relationships, including friendships</p> | <p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • 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 respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs. • 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. |
| Online and media | <p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. • 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 e.g. pornography 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 should know</p> |

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| | <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 (in all contexts, including online). |
| Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health | <p>Pupils should 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 and menopause. • 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, efficacy 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. • about the 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. |