Diocese of Norwich
St Benet's
Multi Academy Trust

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

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Our Christian Ethos and Values

Our academies are open to all and accepting of all regardless of faith. Our passion and ambition are to see children and young people in all our academies achieve excellent educational outcomes alongside developing and growing into their potential as individuals made in the image of God.

Our culture is one of high aspiration for all. This is rooted in our Christian values as demonstrated in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We have a desire to see our academies acknowledged as places of aspiration, high quality learning, achievement and hope making a significant contribution to the communities they serve.

All policies within St Benet's Multi Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as "the Trust"), whether relating to an individual academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our Christian ethos and values.

Overall accountabilities and roles

The Trust has overall accountability for all its academies and staff. Through a Scheme of Delegation it sets out the responsibilities of the Trust, its Executive Officers, the Local Governance Committee and the Headteacher. The Headteacher of each academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Trust.

All employees of the Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

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Policy context and Rationale

This relationships, sex and health education policy covers *Lighthouse Federation* (hereafter referred to as "the school") approach to teaching relationships, sex and health education (RSHE).

The policy has been subject to a Trust wide consultation process with parents/carers. The use of *the Jigsaw PSHE scheme* has been subject to a school consultation with parents/carers.

Trust wide Consultation has ensured the needs of all pupils can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate RSHE curriculum that addresses relevant issues informed by analysis of public health data and pupil priorities. The Consultation has been published to all parents/carers.

Policy availability

Stakeholders can be informed about the policy through RSHE consultation events, or accessing a copy from the school website. Should a hard-copy of the document be required, the school will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs, ensuring equitable accessibility for all. The policy can be obtained in an alternative format by contacting Laura Watts, Executive Headteacher.

Policy values, aims and objectives

Our school supports the aims and objectives set out by the Secretary of State for Education in the RSHE Guidance, 2019 which says 'Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society'.

Secretary of State Foreword, 2019

RSHE is delivered to complement the vision and values of St Benet's MAT. Our Trust vision statement is 'Immeasurably more than we can imagine – Ephesians 3:20'. As a Church of England education trust established by the Diocese of Norwich, our vision is rooted in the conviction that all children and young people in our academies can achieve their God-given potential.

St Benet's Multi Academy Trust is a strong community; open and welcoming to those of all faiths and none. Rooted in the life and teachings of Jesus, our schools are places of aspiration and hope. In line with our vision, we are ambitious to see the pupils and adults in our schools flourish and achieve their full potential as individuals made in the image of God. High quality learning leads to strong academic achievement and personal growth, ensuring pupils and adults achieve more than they can imagine. Out Trust values are Honest, Courage, Compassion, Hope.

Our school's overarching distinctively Christian vision for pupils is 'Let your Light Shine'. RSHE is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of RSHE lessons.

RSHE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. It will equip children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, within which they value their sexuality and take responsibility for their health and wellbeing both now and in the future. We recognise the importance of RSHE in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The objective of RSHE is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development, through the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law, relevant provisions of the Equality Act, 2010 and through the teaching of the Christian perspectives on relationships and sex.

Effective RSHE can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by pupils to establish and maintain relationships. RSHE will ensure children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care in line with our Christian values. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

RSHE will be approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving pupil health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes. The following principles are based on research evidence, supported by a wide range of leading organisations including NSPCC, Barnardo's, The Children's Society and education unions.

Within the Trust, we are committed to the RSHE which:

- Is taught by staff regularly trained in RSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme where appropriate)
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and about how they can contribute at home
- Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills

- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion
- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online
- Gives a positive view of human sexuality, with honest and medically accurate information, so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity
- Gives pupils opportunities 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
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the school nurse and other health and advice services, including reliable information online
- Respects gender equality and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in RSHE lessons and in every-day school life
- Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences - including those with special educational needs and disabilities
- Seeks pupils' views about RSHE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change

Entitlement and equality of opportunity

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner. Teachers will include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child will be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self–esteem.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our pupils, their families and the wider whole-school community. RSHE will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law, to ensure all pupils have equal access to our RSHE curriculum. We do not use RSHE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another.

Through consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances including gender identity, faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community in accordance with the school's approach to inclusion.

Teaching and learning

The RSHE programme will be led by the Executive Headteacher and taught by class teachers or occasionally TAs. All staff involved in the delivery of RSHE have received specialist training to ensure that pupils receive clear and consistent approaches to RSHE throughout their time at the school. Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal system.

Teaching staff in preparing and delivering lessons will make all appropriate adaptations to ensure learning is accessible to all, including those with SEND, in line with our inclusive practice.

On occasion external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSHE because of the particular expertise or to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, the school will:

- Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with their planned programme and our published policy
- Discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils
- Ask to see the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan in advance, to ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs)
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy.
- Arrange for the visitor to be supervised/supported by a member of school staff at all times
- Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning

RSHE will be taught through a range of teaching methodologies, including story-telling, drama, discussions, individual private reflection, quizzes and fact finding, value spectrums, debating, independent research and artistic presentations etc. This wide range of teaching strategies promotes engagement by all pupils, irrespective of preferred learning styles.

Curriculum

The majority of elements of the RSHE curriculum are a statutory requirement to teach to meet the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance, July 2025 and The Equalities Act, 2010.

RSHE will be taught through a 'spiral curriculum'. This approach means that pupils will gain knowledge, develop values and acquire skills gradually during their school years by re-visiting core themes to build on prior learning. RSHE will support the school's commitment to safeguard pupils through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

Our intended RSHE curriculum is detailed below, but may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our pupils are living and learning. If this is the case parent/carers will be provided with appropriate notice before the amended programme is delivered. Where possible the curriculum will be complemented by themed assemblies, topic days and cross curricular links.

We will use Jigsaw PSHE to resource our curriculum.

Primary

Relationships Education	*Families and people who care for me* *Caring friendships* *Respectful, kind relationships* *Online safety and awareness* *Being safe*
Sex Education	*How a baby is conceived and born*
Health and wellbeing Education	*General wellbeing* *Wellbeing online* *Physical health and fitness* *Healthy Eating* *Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping* *Health protection and prevention* *Personal safety* *Basic first aid* *Developing bodies*

Assessment and monitoring

Pupils' learning will be assessed at the end of every topic to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment activities will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that pupils do not feel under pressure. There will be self-assessment tasks throughout the programme that will confirm pupils understanding of the topics. The evaluation of teaching and learning assessments will be shared with pupils and parents as appropriate.

The quality of RSHE teaching and learning will be monitored through RSHE learning walks, team teaching and informal drop-ins conducted by subject leads and/or members of the senior leadership team. Governors will monitor the quality of provision, pupil progress and accessibility of the RSHE provision. Specific governor responsibilities are in section 38 and 39 of the RSHE Guidance. The observations and findings of which will be used to identify and inform future staff training and resource needs.

Answering Difficult Questions and Sensitive Issues

Staff members are aware that views around RSHE are varied. However, whilst personal views are respected, all RSHE issues are discussed and explored without personal opinion or bias.

Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also to respect that others have the right to a different opinion.

Both formal and informal RSHE, arising from pupils' questions, are dealt with according to the age and maturity of the pupils concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. Pupils may be referred back to their parents at times, where questions go beyond the focus of the lesson, and where this is deemed the right thing to do. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to senior colleagues if they are concerned, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead where this might be appropriate.

We believe that RSHE should meet the needs of all pupils, answer appropriate questions and offer support. All pupils should be responded to equally and respect, with due regard to protected characteristics and family backgrounds.

Responses will need to be dealt with sensitively with respect to sexual orientation and appropriate support may be identified and offered. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly, yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents/carers on this issue to reassure them of the content and context. Above all, we encourage open dialogue and conversation with parents, carers and pupils, seeking to address individual needs as they arise.

During the teaching of puberty and sex education, the class teachers give children the opportunity to ask 'difficult questions' anonymously using a question box. Children can put the question in the box and, if considered appropriate, the teacher can answer it for the whole class. Where questions fall outside of the taught curriculum, they will identify appropriate ways to respond and consult with senior colleagues and external professionals where required.

Confidentiality, signposting and handling disclosures

The school's responsibility to safeguard pupils through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

At the beginning of RSHE teaching the class will discuss and create a 'working agreement'. Confidentiality will be included within this agreement so pupils are clear of the limits of confidentiality that can be guaranteed by a teacher.

Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within RSE avoids pupils feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels comfortable. This strategy makes RSHE more accessible to all pupils, including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

Teachers will signpost pupils to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Teachers will also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise of topic coverage so that the school can be responsive to pupil's pastoral needs, and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required.

Teachers will conduct RSHE lessons in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference 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. They will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will then deal with the matter in line with the Safeguarding policy.

Involving parents and carers

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children in RSHE and that RSHE is most effective when it is a collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

The school operates an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss RSHE at relevant times throughout the school year.

The Secretary of State's letter published 23rd October 2023 states that schools and providers of teaching resources should share their RSHE materials with parents. It states that parents should have confidence in their right to see what their children are being taught in the classroom and giving them an opportunity to comment. The letter states that companies providing teaching resources cannot use copyright law to forbid parents from seeing materials, and that schools should share materials regardless.

Sharing RSHE resources in the context of face-to-face meetings is optimal (so what you cover, why you cover it and how you cover it can be best understood) but this is not always be suitable for busy families. Schools can lawfully share copies of resources via an online "parent portal" or, if this is not possible, through a presentation. Schools should ask families to agree that the content will not be copied or shared further except as authorised by copyright law. If families cannot attend a presentation or access an online 'parent portal', schools may provide copies of materials for families to take home, provided they agree not to copy the content or share it further except as authorised by copyright law.

Parental right to have a child excused

The vast majority of RSHE is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers are only able to request that their child is excused from sex education, taught outside of the national curriculum for science. If a parent wishes their child to be excused from some or all of the non-statutory sex education, they should discuss this with the Headteacher, making clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The Headteacher should outline to the parents the

benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once a decision has been made, they must inform the school in writing stating their reasons as to why they would like their child withdrawn.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to have their child excused from non-statutory sex education, 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.

The school must document this process.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Links to other school policies and curriculum

This policy complements the following policies and curriculum:

- Anti-bullying
- Assessment
- Behaviour
- British Values
- Citizenship
- Confidentiality
- Equality and diversity
- Extremism
- ICT and Internet Acceptable Use
- Inclusion
- Music and the Arts
- Online safety
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Safeguarding
- SMSC
- Science
- Teaching and learning

Review date or Monitoring and Review

The Trust Board monitors the impact of RSHE on an annual basis. The Trustees give serious consideration to any comments, consultation and evidence of impact.

Consultation with pupils will be conducted on a regular basis to support with reviewing the curriculum to ensure it remains responsive to emerging needs and the policy updated accordingly.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if the RSHE curriculum is amended, for example in response to emerging themes, changing pupil needs or introduction of new legislation and guidance. The next review date of this policy is currently set for July 2027.