

Dysart School Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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<i>Approved by:</i>	Local Governing Body
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Relationships and sex education policy

Introduction

Young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and are learning to live their lives both on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. At Dysart, we recognise that our students need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way, enabling them to live meaningful, healthy, safe, lives with independence, happiness and success.

Relationships and sex education is a key part of helping young people to stay safe, make healthy and positive choices and to be well prepared for life in modern Britain. It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development and sex, sexuality and sexual health. It enhances the self-worth and confidence of each individual and encourages mutually respectful relationships and empathy for others.

Dysart acknowledges that children and young people with SEND may be especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. All of our working practices are designed to maximise opportunities for our students: to learn how to be and keep safe; to communicate and be understood through whichever means of communication is most effective for them; to build healthy and enriching relationships; to maximise their potential and achieve ambitious goals within their local communities. Clear, relevant and inclusive RSE plays a crucial part in safeguarding.

This policy sets out the teaching of relationships and sex education and health education at Dysart. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'Relationships and Sex Education' is used to encompass all of these strands. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Child Protection, Adult Protection, and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, and our Safeguarding and Wellbeing Offer. These can all be viewed on the school website and hard copies are available on request from the school office.

Parents of Dysart students as well as the Dysart staff team were consulted during Autumn 2021 and again in Autumn 2022 on this policy and invited to give feedback.

We recognise that the role of parents and carers in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. They are the first teachers of their children and have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. We believe that the teaching of RSE at Dysart is a collaborative partnership between the school and families, and we will work closely with every family to ensure that their views are heard and that every student can engage with the RSE curriculum.

Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy in relation to themselves and others
- Provide students with the knowledge and understanding to be able to make healthy choices about their lives and relationships

- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for growing into adulthood and give them an understanding of both physical and mental development, including sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene

Statutory requirements

This policy is written with reference to legislation and government guidance including section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), sections 403, 406 and 407 of the [Education Act 1996](#), the [Equality Act 2010](#), the Public Sector Equality Duty (which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities), and government guidance on [relationships and sex education and health education](#).

At Dysart, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Please refer to our funding agreement and articles of association for further information.

Development of this policy

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents and staff. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- The proposed RSE curriculum was developed by Dysart staff during the summer term 2021
- Parents / Carers, staff, and governors were consulted during the autumn term 2021
- Following a change in the OHCAT policy, the revised RSE policy was shared with parents / carers, staff and governors for consultation in November 2022. This consultation included the revised draft policy as well as the curriculum plans
- Following this consultation period, the policy will be approved by the school's local governing board and will be reviewed again in Autumn 2023

Definitions

“What is relationships education at Dysart?”

Relationships Education is learning about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults.

“What is relationships and sex education at Dysart?”

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.

It is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

It is not about the promotion of sexual activity, but aims to build knowledge and understanding so that young people can make healthy, well-informed choices about their lives and relationships as they grow into adulthood.

Curriculum

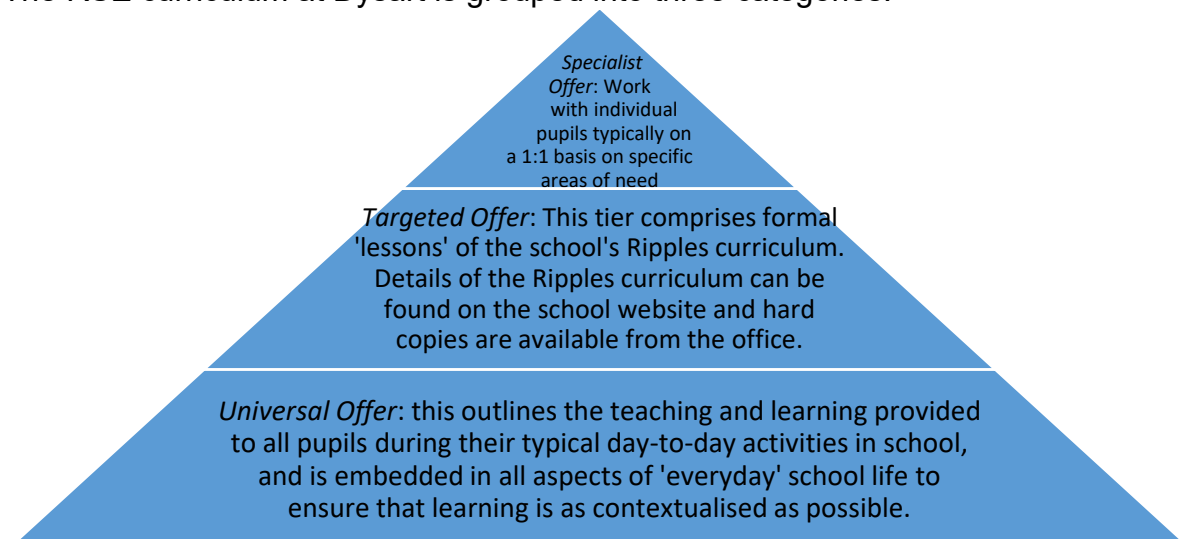
From time to time, sensitive issues will be raised by students or parents. It is important that all individuals concerned with the delivery of RSE in school are aware of the agreed values framework. The issues may concern sexual identity or orientation, homophobic bullying and different families. It is important to acknowledge that students may hear these terms through different sources such as the media and need to feel able to ask for further information.

- If a student asks a question during a whole or small group class session, staff will be expected to answer honestly and factually.
- Students' questions will be answered according to their maturity and understanding, with parents being fully involved and informed.
- Staff responses to questions will focus heavily on the importance of healthy relationships.

Questions answered need to follow school policy. Where curriculum queries are raised, these need to be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The response from the member of staff will be appropriate to the student's age and maturity, and thought will be given to whether the response is appropriate in the context of a small class group or individual situation. Questions will always be treated with respect and with a caring response and staff will always be sensitive to underlying problems which may be worrying a student.

The RSE curriculum at Dysart is grouped into three categories:



Universal Offer

Universal/Daily offer – Cross-curricular learning opportunities

- Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education will be embedded within all aspects of school life at Dysart and these everyday experiences will form the main basis through which children and young people will acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to stay healthy, safe, creating and maintaining positive relationships to help them thrive now and in the future.
- Learning opportunities will appear in every step of the student's school day. Some examples of those daily living skills opportunities are:
 - Toilet training – *using the loo, wiping independently, washing hands, using hygiene products, flushing down, looking themselves in the mirror, locking the door, etc.*
 - Looking after my body: *healthy diet, eating less food/sugar, trying new food, doing exercise, games that I like, sharing games, learning rules, dangers (medicines, chemicals).*
 - Dress/undress independently: *including choosing what to wear, checking if clothes are inside out/opposite side, do their shoe laces, etc.*
 - Menstruation support: *cleaning intimate parts appropriately, using female hygiene products, communicating their needs, asking for help, etc.*
 - Labelling body parts: *use the correct vocabulary to name their body parts, including genitals.*
 - Changing for swimming – *how to make a space private, correct ways of placing swimming kits avoiding exposing private parts, parts of the body, etc.*
 - Privacy: *what is mine? What spaces are private? How to make a space private?, close the door, staying safe, e-safety, etc.*
 - Spaces at home, at school and out in the community: *label spaces, differentiate activities I do in those spaces, private/public, manners, etc.*
 - Maintaining positive friendships: *appropriate/inappropriate touches, bad touches, consequences, how to say sorry, safe places to touch, how to say NO, etc.*
 - Relax and calming strategies: *benefits of sleeping, trying new/positive ways of calming down: yoga, relaxation, breathing, stretches, sensory activities, etc.*
 - Dangerous situations: *how to respond in an emergency, how to identify dangerous products, how to call 999, basic first aid, cross the road, signs, etc.*
 - Family members: *correct name and role of family members, learning address, writing name of mum/dad/career, etc.*
 - Likes/dislikes: *what makes me feel good?, trying new things, expressing ideas, communicate preferences, etc.*
 - Different relationships: *difference between friends and friendly behaviour, difference between parents and teachers, etc.*
 - Work related training – *preparing for life outside school, taking my own choices, expressing my views, independent living training, etc.*
 - Staying safe when using appliances: *plug/unplug and correct use of different appliances e.g. toaster, kettle, dishwasher, microwave, oven, hoover, etc.*
 - Friendships – *developing and maintaining positive relationships, appropriate touch when playing, saying NO, communicating issues, problem solving, etc.*
 - Coping with strong feelings – *changes when growing up, labelling feelings, confusion, feeling alone, etc.*
- A total communication approach will be key when working with students. Communicating their needs, asking for help or requesting more information about topics such as personal hygiene, solving problems or using private/public spaces will be situations pupils will face every day.

Targeted Offer

Targeted offer – Through discrete sessions ('Ripples' curriculum)

- The Ripples curriculum will be delivered in discrete sessions for PSHE within the timetable, and also within the themed curriculum. Topics will be mapped across the three/four-year creative curriculum programme.
- Lessons will be delivered by class teachers who will be fully informed and expected to deal with issues sensitively. The RSE co-ordinator will work with staff to discuss issues and planning. Some lessons may be delivered by a specialist in school or a visiting professional.
- Whilst the majority of teaching may be done in a class group, alternative pupil groupings may be appropriate e.g. Single sex groups, ability groups across waves, small group's programmes.
- A variety of topics will be covered in these discrete sessions. All topics are designed accordingly with the maturity and developmental stage of pupils. Examples of these topics are: relationships, menstruation, self-stimulation, diversity, emotions, consent, public/private, careers and future choices, friendships, etc.
- During these sessions, students will be supported at all times by trained staff aware of their needs and communication strategies. Sessions will be private and safe and a sign will be displayed outside the classroom to indicate a session is on-going.
- As part of the sessions, teachers may use a variety of specialised resources such as social stories, visuals, key objects or appropriate videos to enhance the learning of the students and support them in their understanding of such important topics.
- Parents will have the right to withdraw their child from certain aspects of the programme (more details can be viewed within the RSE policy, on the Dysart website). The exception is those parts that are included in the statutory national curriculum.

The exact knowledge and skills taught to pupils within the Ripples curriculum can be found on the school website or by contacting the school directly.

Specialist Offer

Specialist offer – Individual / Personalised support

- Personalised 1:1 or small group sessions covering challenging topics that might be affecting the child normal development as an adult.
- Individual programmes for students that require more input or additional help for specific aspects of Relations Education / RSE / Health Education.
- Close work with families to identify pupils who may require additional support from external agencies.
- Topic based resources for a better understanding of sensible topics of the Ripples curriculum, including personalised scripts especially designed for SEN pupils.
- 'Multi-disciplinary team', consisting of Educational Psychologist, Behaviour Analyst, School Nurse, CAMHS practitioner alongside lead for RSE. Early identification, specific support for pupils who require a higher level of input enabling us to link in strongly with the Emotional Health Service.
- Staff de-briefing meetings following any concern in order to improve outcomes for pupils.

Delivery of RSE

Teaching is delivered primarily by staff based in the same class as the pupil. However, particularly for pupils accessing learning through the specialist offer, there may be occasions where staff with a more specialist knowledge of key concepts are involved in either the planning and / or delivery of learning with pupils.

Pupil learning is assessed and recorded on the *Evidence for Learning* platform. This is the platform that we use at Dysart to record and measure progress made by pupils towards their curriculum outcomes as well as their EHCP outcomes. More details about *Evidence for Learning* can be found on the school website or by contacting school.

Parents will always be expressly included in decisions related to learning delivered through the Ripples curriculum. Typically, this will be through the regular meetings that we hold with parents throughout the year to discuss and agree curriculum outcomes for pupils. Parents will always be fully involved in any work that their child participates through the specialist offer. Any parent wishing to discuss what the universal offer looks like specifically for their child is encouraged to contact their child's class teacher in the first instance, and then the school's RSE lead (details can be found on the school website or from the school office) if there are any follow-up questions.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

When teaching any sensitive topic such as RSE, which deals with family life, safe and appropriate touching, personal body parts and healthy relationships, we recognise the potential to uncover incidents of abuse through children's disclosures. All members of staff who deliver any of our Relationship Education or Relationships and Sex Education Programme have statutory training around safeguarding children and are aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern. All staff involved in delivering and supporting RSE will be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and are aware that they cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality to the child. If there is a concern about the child's safety, staff will follow safeguarding procedures as set out in our Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

We recognise that for children who may be vulnerable due to past or present abuse or changes in family situations, some learning units may need to be adapted due to the sensitive nature of the topics covered. Providing RSE Education is deemed to be a protective factor in preventing further abuse, as it may help children make sense of their experiences and help them develop the skills and resilience needed to keep them safe in future. The School will ensure that Schemes of Work may be adapted as appropriate to meet individual pupil needs in relation to their contextual circumstances.

Roles and responsibilities

The Local Governing Body (LGB)

The LGB will hold the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy, through updates at termly LGB meetings as well as portfolio activities undertaken in order to provide support and challenge.

This policy will be reviewed and approved annually by the LGB.

The Principal

The Principal, with the support of the Senior Leadership Team, will ensure that:

- A suitable approach to the teaching and evaluation of RSE is in place within the school, informed by regular consultation with pupils/students, staff and families and compliant with all relevant requirements e.g. equality duties.
- Requests to withdraw pupils from (non-statutory) components of RSE (see section 6) are managed appropriately.
- Ensure all staff are aware of and abide by the policy, this RSE Procedure and related documentation.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are familiar with and adhere to this policy, the RSE policy and all other relevant policies and procedures.
- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE.
- Monitoring student progress.
- Responding to the needs of individual students.
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE.
- Understanding the relationship between RSE and safeguarding, including how to manage any safeguarding concerns that may come to light during the course of RSE provision being delivered, and how to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal.

Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents

We know that the primary role in children's Relationships and Sex Education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of pupils at Dysart through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective all parents will be:

- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.

- Consulted and encouraged to participate in the development of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.
- Able to discuss any questions or curriculum queries directly with the school.

Parents should be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of individual staff members will not influence the teaching of RSE.

Parents' right to withdraw

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. Any parent or carer wishing to withdraw a child from the programme must put their request in writing to the Principal.

Before granting any such request, we will seek to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the pupil themselves to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. We will want to document this process to ensure a record is kept.

Pupils who are withdrawn will be accommodated separately and will be set appropriate alternative work to complete.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and updates are included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Principal will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE. All training delivered to staff is training that is specifically focussed on supporting learners with severe and complex learning difficulties.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed and approved annually by the Principal and the Local Governing Body.

Guidance for parents/carers

Relationships, sex and health education: guides for parents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>

PSHE Association

Sex Education Forum

<https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/>

Brook – Healthy lives for young people

<https://www.brook.org.uk/>

Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

To be completed by parents			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			
To be completed by the school			
Agreed actions from discussion with parents			

