



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Policy Reviewed Autumn 2024
Next Updated: Autumn 2025

Introduction

All members of the Cheshire Academies Trust (CAT) community are treated with the respect and sensitivity implicit within the practice of a code of equal opportunities and inclusion. Equality of treatment and opportunity operate regardless of background, ability, gender, religion, disability or ethnicity.

“To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships to build their self-efficacy.” Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019

Aims and Objectives

The aim of Relationships and Sex Education is to provide children with age appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health-related behaviours. This should take place with consideration for the qualities of relationships within families.

The aims of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) are:

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled;
- To clarify/reinforce existing knowledge;
- To raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others;
- To help pupils understand their sexual feelings and behaviour, so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives;
- To help pupils develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness) and make the most of their abilities;
- To provide the confidence to be participating members of society and to value themselves and others;
- To help gain access to information and support;
- To develop skills for a healthier safer lifestyle;
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media;
- To respect and care for their bodies;
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood.

Statutory Requirements

As a primary academy school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. We do not have to follow the National Curriculum but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, 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.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. At primary school level we teach about respectful, positive relationships, the importance of self-respect and key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body.

Planning the Curriculum

Every child is entitled to receive RSE regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability, sexuality, language special needs, disadvantage or if they are Looked After Children. It is our intention all children have the opportunity to experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development, with differentiated provision if required.

In CAT academies Relationships and Sex Education reflects the values of the RSE framework. RSE is taught by class, RSE is not taught in isolation but is embedded within other curriculum areas, including PSHRE and Science.

The teaching of RSE will also link closely with the relationships and health education wherever appropriate. Please see our Relationships and Health Education policy for more information. It will promote self-esteem and emotional health and well-being and help children form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community. Sex Education also forms part of the Science curriculum. RSE is not taught in isolation but is embedded within other curriculum areas, including PSHE and Science.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships and health education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the sex education classes. The school will always write to parents before this content is delivered. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Pupils

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

Assessment and Recording

Monitoring is the responsibility of the curriculum lead for Relationships and Sex Education and the Safeguarding Local Governor. Each academy will assess the effectiveness of the aims, content and methods in promoting students' learning through lesson observation, the sampling of teachers' planning, questionnaires to teachers and children and feedback from parents. The effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing change if required.

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of these children in order for them to have full access to the content of RSE.

Training

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

Behaviour and Safety

The role of the RSE Subject Leader in each academy is undertaken in line with school policy. The Principal is responsible for implementing the school's RSE policy and ensuring that performance management reviews take place.

Role of the Curriculum Leader

The role of the RSE subject leader includes:

- highlight areas for the development of RSE within the School Development Plan and be aware of the annual budget available for this;
- co-ordinate the purchase and maintenance of equipment;
- keep up to date with developments;
- ensure that this policy is successfully implemented throughout the school;
- review and update this policy periodically.

Role of the Trust Board

The Trust Board is responsible for the approval of the RSE policy. The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and impact of the policy in practice and approving the local scheme of work.

Scheme of work

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know:

- 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
- 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 marriage 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
- Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know:

- 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

Pupils should know:

- 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
- 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

Pupils should know:

- 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

Pupils should know:

- 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, for example family, school or other sources