DJANOGLY CITY ACADEMY

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Incorporates RSE, Health Education and PSHE

2024 – 2026

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Introduction

This policy outlines our academy's commitment to provide effective Relationships, Sex and Health Education for all scholars in support of that offered by parents, who are the first educators of their children in this area. It has been written with regard to the DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance 2019 and other relevant guidance documents and statutory requirements.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 make Relationships, Sex and Health Education compulsory for scholars receiving secondary education.

The RSHE teaching in this academy contributes to our statutory duty to safeguard scholars and prepare them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. RSHE is taught in a progressive, sequenced, age-appropriate manner throughout the academy.

Formulation, Dissemination, Monitoring and Review of Policy

The RSE policy has been developed following consultation with the whole academy community. Consultation took place in the following ways:

- Staff Survey
- Scholar Voice
- Parental Consultation Evenings

In developing our policy and curriculum we have given due regard to the government's statutory guidance for RSHE issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

The RSHE policy is available on the academy website and free of charge to interested parties via reception.

The RSE policy and curriculum will be reviewed annually by the Head of Personal Development, Senior Leadership and governors. This review will be informed by the following:

- Scholar Voice
- Staff Voice
- Teacher Assessment
- Changes in Policy or Legislation
- parent feedback

What is RSHE?

RSHE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. Through RSHE, scholars learn about healthy relationships, diversity, respect, love and commitment, healthy lifestyles, safety both on and offline, puberty, sex, sexuality and sexual health. There is often concern that RSHE will encourage sexual experimentation however evidence shows that those who receive comprehensive RSE education at school are more likely to delay their first sexual activity and to use contraception when they do have sex. At secondary level we are building on the foundations of skills and knowledge that scholars have learnt at primary school.

Our key aim in providing RSHE throughout the academy is to safeguard our scholars. During their time at the academy, scholars will learn key knowledge and skills to help keep themselves, and others, safe, healthy, and prepare them for the responsibilities of adult life.

Why RSHE is important in our Academy

As an academy we put the needs of the scholars in our care first. We know it's important for them to be literate and numerate with appropriate qualifications to prepare them for adult life and its challenges, but we also know that scholars need to develop their social and emotional skills. Our RSHE curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that all scholars are informed about healthy relationships at an appropriate level for their age and development. This is not taught in isolation and links to other areas of the curriculum and enrichment in order to give it meaning and aid understanding. Our academy serves a disadvantaged community with a significant proportion of scholars who are vulnerable to outside influences. Our RSHE curriculum supports scholars to understand the risks and to keep themselves safe.

We acknowledge that not all parents feel confident or comfortable talking to their scholars about this area therefore our work within the academy, ensures that all scholars are given a high standard of education about key aspects needed to keep safe and make positive, informed and healthy choices.

Key Objectives

Our RSHE programme will focus on three elements: exploring attitudes and values; developing skills; and, improving knowledge and understanding. We aim to develop well-rounded individuals who respect themselves and others, are able to communicate effectively and take responsibility for their actions.

The key objectives of our RSHE programme are to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of what positive and healthy relationships look like and the skills to form nurturing relationships or all kinds, not just intimate relationships
- Enable scholars to recognise unhealthy relationships and abuse and have the knowledge and skills to seek help for themselves or others
- Give scholars the knowledge and skills to make informed, healthy decisions about their mental and physical health
- Prepare scholars for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- Develop an awareness and understanding of relevant laws, for example those around consent, sexual violence, rape, drugs, and image-sharing
- Develop knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and sexual health, including Sexually Transmitted Infections, sexual orientation, contraception and reasons for delaying sexual activity
- Support scholars to develop a positive sense of their own identity, showing respect for themselves and others, and having resilience
- Support scholars to keep safe, both online and offline, including assessing the risks and benefits of their actions and recognising that pressures and influences come from a range of sources
- Provide scholars with the knowledge and skills to access appropriate support

The RSHE programme is based on the needs of scholars in the academy, with learning outcomes appropriate to their age, ability and level of maturity. RSHE will be firmly embedded within our broader curriculum areas, including Science and PE, in addition to more focused learning through dedicated RSHE lessons, and assemblies. Currently 1.5 hours per week are allocated for designated RSHE lessons at Years 7, 8 and 9, and one hour per week is allocated to Years 10 and 11. In addition all year groups have a weekly forum where key topics are discussed in an assembly format.

Equality, Inclusion and Support

We are required to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Our academy values diversity, encourages respect for all and promotes tolerance for, and celebration of, difference. We do not discriminate against scholars because of any protected characteristic (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation). At times, when there is an identified need, we may take positive action through our planning and delivery of RSHE to deal with disadvantages facing those with a particular characteristic.

RSHE will be accessible to all regardless of their gender. Through the delivery of RSHE teachers will explore gender stereotypes and how they may limit a person's potential and ensure that people of all genders receive information that is relevant to their needs.

There are many different faith and cultural perspectives on aspects of RSHE. As an academy we will deliver RSHE in a factual, non-judgmental way ensuring that teachers do not promote one faith or cultural viewpoint but rather provide a balanced approach that acknowledges the wealth of views and opinions of our community and teaches tolerance. Parents and carers are key partners in RSHE and are best placed to support their children to understand how learning at school fits with their family's faith, beliefs and values. To support this process we will ensure that parents are made aware of what will be taught in our RSHE programme and when.

We will use a range of materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our academy population and encourage acceptance and tolerance. We want every scholar and family to feel included, celebrated, respected and valued.

Teachers will plan in different ways and use a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals. For some scholars, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities, a differentiated approach may be necessary to ensure learning outcomes are met. Some scholars may have experienced adverse childhood experiences that may impact on their ability to engage with RSHE in a variety of ways. Care will be taken to ensure that, where this is the case parents/carers are consulted about the most appropriate way for the scholar to access the curriculum.

A range of different families and relationships will be explored within RSHE, including same-sex relationships. Referencing a range of relationships will be integral to our programme of RSHE. All scholars whatever their identity, developing identity, or family background need to feel that RSHE is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. This means that resources and books used will reflect both our academy community and wider society.

The Curriculum

RSHE will be taught in each year group throughout the academy. The curriculum we deliver is age-appropriate and progressive, building the scholar's knowledge, understanding and skills year on year. We work to objectives in each year group that support the achievement of outcomes outlined in the government RSHE guidance. See APPENDIX 1

Some elements of RSHE are delivered through national curriculum Science:

Key Stage 3

Scholars should be taught about:

- Reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.
- The effects of recreational drugs (including substance misuse) on behaviour, health and life processes
- Comparing energy values of different foods (from labels)

Key Stage 4

Scholars should be taught about:

- The relationship between health and disease
- communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDs)
- reducing and preventing the spread of infectious diseases in animals and plants
- the impact of lifestyle factors in the incidence of non-communicable diseases
- hormones in human reproduction, hormonal and non-hormonal methods of contraception
- sex determination in humans

In addition to the Science curriculum we will work towards the outcomes outlined in the government's RSHE Guidance, under the headings shown below. Each topic will be covered in an age-appropriate way during a scholar's time at the academy, with regular repetition of key themes. These elements will be delivered through timetabled PSHE sessions, health days, tutor time and assemblies.

Learning will also be supported through cross-curricular approaches.

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health
- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy Eating
- Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco
- Health and Prevention

- Basic First Aid
- Changing adolescent body

The curriculum will be evaluated and reviewed by scholars and teachers on a regular basis.

Resources

As with any other subject, the breadth of the RSHE curriculum necessitates the use of a wide variety of age-appropriate activities, books and resources. Teachers select resources that support the learning outcomes for the year group they are teaching. We hold a parents meeting each year where you can familiarise yourself with the resources to be used. If you would like to see these at other times of the year, please speak to your child's teacher. We will inform you of what will be taught in each term through the RSHE curriculum page of our website. If you would like to discuss any of the resources in more detail please contact us.

Teaching and Learning

The Head of Personal Development is responsible for planning lesson content and providing relevant resources to all teaching staff who deliver. Teaching assistants may provide additional support for scholars with SEND. Everyone involved in the teaching of RSHE will follow the academy policy.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff will not influence the delivery of RSHE. A balanced and non-judgmental approach will be taken. Teachers, and all those contributing to RSHE, will work to the agreed values within this policy.

To ensure that all scholars feel able to contribute effectively to RSHE a number of teaching strategies will be used, including:

- Establishing a group agreement with scholars;
- Using 'distancing' techniques (e.g. Case studies and role-play)
- The provision of a 'question box' during key planned sessions
- Dealing with questions in an age-appropriate manner
- Using discussion and appropriate materials
- Encouraging reflection.

RSHE will be delivered all year round – parents/carers will be informed of what will be covered when via our website.

External Speakers

We may use outside visitors to enhance the RSHE provision delivered by teachers. We plan these inputs carefully to ensure effectiveness. All visiting speakers will:

- Be suitably qualified to deliver RSHE sessions
- Be aware of the academy policy on RSHE and work within this
- Be supervised by a member of staff at all times when on academy premises

- Alert the teacher to any safeguarding concerns
- Understand their contribution they make to the broader RSHE programme
- Be suitably vetted prior to being booked

Safe Learning in RSHE

It is important that all scholars feel safe and able to participate in RSHE lessons. To support the involvement of all scholars, teachers will create a group agreement with each class outlining expectations around rights, responsibilities and respect. The group agreement will be a working document that all scholars agree to follow.

As with any topic scholars will ask questions during RSHE to further their understanding. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic teachers will employ strategies to ensure that questions are asked and answered in a factual, balanced and age-appropriate way. The group agreement, framed as the five golden rules, will remind scholars that personal questions of the teacher or other scholars are not appropriate.

Teachers will use the following strategies to deal with unexpected questions:

- If a question is personal, the teacher will remind scholars of the rules set in the group agreement
- If the teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, the teacher will acknowledge this and will research the question and provide an appropriate answer later.

Sometimes scholars may ask questions about issues that are not part of the planned programme, this could show that the taught curriculum is not meeting their needs. These questions will be answered in a factual and balanced manner appropriate to the age of scholars. The questions will also be fed back to the Coordinator as part of the evaluation and monitoring process.

Staff Training

All staff delivering RSHE will receive training. If a staff member has additional learning and development needs these will be supported either through mentoring from a more experienced staff member in the academy, team-teaching, observations, or attendance at an internal or external training event. Training on more specific RSHE topics will take place as and when required to support the needs of teachers, scholars and the academy as a whole.

Assessment and Review

Teachers use a range of assessment strategies to track scholars' progress towards our published learning outcomes. The named governor will monitor and evaluate the delivery and impact of the RSHE curriculum.

Parents

We believe that RSHE is a partnership between the academy and parents/carers. We recognise that parents are the first teachers of their children and welcome their engagement with our RSHE programme. It is important that RSHE delivered in the academy is explored in more detail within the context of individual families. Parents will be routinely informed about RSHE through the academy website and letters/texts/emails to explain when RSHE will take place in different year groups and what will be covered.

Right to be excused from Sex Education

Whilst we always try to work with parents to explore their views, we also accept that parents can exercise their right to excuse their child from the sex education elements of our programme (other than that which comes within the Science curriculum). There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. The RSHE we provide is planned to meet the needs of all scholars and give them the knowledge and skills they need to lead healthy lives. Withdrawing scholars from RSHE can be detrimental and lead to them receiving less accurate, second-hand information from peers.

To request that a scholar be excused from Sex Education parents should write to the Principal. The Head of Personal Development will arrange to speak with parents to explore their views and ensure that the nature and purpose of RSHE is understood. A written record will be kept of this discussion. Except in exceptional circumstances, the academy will respect a parent's right to excuse their child up until three terms before a scholar's 16th birthday when the child can choose to be included in Sex Education.

The process above is the same for scholars with SEND, however in exceptional circumstances the head teacher may take account of a scholar's specific needs arising from their SEND when agreeing or not any application to be excused.

The Head of Personal Development will plan appropriate, purposeful education for scholars who are withdrawn from sex education.

Confidentiality, Safeguarding and Child Protection

Everyone involved in RSHE will be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. Teachers will discuss confidentiality with scholars through the development of a group agreement at the start of lessons, making it clear that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Scholars will be informed if confidentiality has to be broken, due to safeguarding concerns, and supported as appropriate. Please see our Safeguarding policy for more details of risk factors.

Through taught lessons, teaching staff will signpost scholars to sources of confidential local and national support services.

Menstrual Wellbeing

Scholars who are menstruating will be supported in the following ways:

- Sanitary disposal units are available in female and unisex/accessible toilets
- Scholars can access emergency sanitary products on request
- For those experiencing period poverty free sanitary protection can be accessed on request

More Information

If you would like to discuss our provision of RSHE further, please contact your child's tutor to be referred to the Head of Personal Development.

Date revised: This policy was last reviewed and revised in September 2024

Review date: This policy is reviewed annually.