



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

The Axholme Academy

February 2026

Review: Spring 2029

Person with overall responsibility: Mr. D Keogh, Principal

PSHE Co-ordinator: Mrs E. Winder

This policy is in accordance with DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' 2019

Purpose of this policy:

This policy defines the Academy's position with regards to Relationships and Sex Education. The policy sits in conjunction with the Academy's policies on PSHE and Citizenship, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Equality and Diversity, Confidentiality, Behaviour and Rewards, SEN and Inclusion, Drugs and Anti-bullying.

The policy does not affect the rights of parents and carers who wish to withdraw their children from Relationships and Sex Education (although the Academy would strongly discourage this).

Rationale

RSE supports the individual's lifelong learning about social, moral, physical and emotional well-being and about sex, sexuality, relationships and sexual health. Embedded within the wider PSHE curriculum, it is intended to enable young people to acquire information, develop skills and form positive beliefs, values and attitudes that support them in a safe transition from adolescence to adulthood.

Young people want reassurance about their body image, behaviours, feelings and relationships. They also need knowledge and skills appropriate to their level of maturity and development. Central to the RSE programme is the growth of self-esteem and taking responsibility for one's self and one's actions. If young people feel positive about themselves, they are much more likely to take care of themselves, think positively of other people and develop non-exploitative, caring relationships. They are also less likely to be exploited by others.

Relationships and Sex education in general is needed as:

- Children and young people say they want to learn more about RSE
- Parents say that although they want to talk to their children and RSE, they also want schools to help them
- It is a legal requirement for schools to provide RSE in line with 2019 guidelines
- RSE can make a positive contribution to children's and young people's personal, social and moral development
- RSE can help to prevent negative health outcomes such as unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections

Objectives for the delivery of RSE at the Axholme Academy:

- To generate an atmosphere where questions of a sexual nature can be asked and answered openly, without embarrassment and where trust and confidentiality are ensured (confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed when there is an issue of safeguarding)
- To enable students to develop knowledge, communication skills and understanding, in order to facilitate personal decision-making
- To enable students to be aware of personal, psychological, emotional and physical changes in themselves and others
- To enable students to develop the ability to form positive, non-exploitative relationships
- To enable students to understand the impact of external influences, such as the media, Internet and peer groups
- To enable students to understand the process of human reproduction
- To enable students to have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and their partner from unintended or unwanted conceptions, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV and Hepatitis C
- To avoid being exploited or exploiting others
- To understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and to realise that abstinence is perfectly acceptable
- To emphasise the role and the value of family life
- To enable students to know what is and what is not legal in matters relating to sexual activity
- To give students advice about how to access further information available both locally and nationally as well as on the internet

Through the delivery of RSE young people will be supported to:

- Develop respect for themselves and others
- Learn to take responsibility for their actions
- Develop honesty and loyalty in relationships
- Learn the importance and responsibilities of the family unit for all members
- Develop sensitivity towards the needs and views of others
- Recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain behaviours
- Recognise and accept the differences of others

Statutory Requirements

As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSE to all pupils under the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty 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

At The Axholme Academy we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy Development

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

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the board of governors and ratified

Guidelines for the delivery of RSE at the Axholme Academy:

1. **The Delivery of RSE** - RSE is always taught with due regard to moral and legal considerations and within the explicit values of family life and supportive relationships. RSE will be delivered in Years 7 to 11 by a variety of approaches, using either:
 - Accredited teachers or trained staff with supportive lesson material
 - Trained health professionals (to include the youth services and school nurse)

RSE within the curriculum will be delivered using a variety of teaching and learning methods and strategies and will be supported by a wide range of up to date, appropriate resources. All will be appropriate to the age and maturity of the students involved and to the issues being addressed, and will be delivered as far as possible by confident staff and/or outside agencies.

2. **Values in the delivery of RSE** - the Government recognises – (as in “Supporting Families”, the Home Office Ministerial Group on the Family consultation document) - that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships other than marriage. Therefore pupils should learn the significance of both marriage and other stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

All those who teach aspects of RSE within the Academy, including visitors, are expected to be guided by the following values framework which represents the values held by the Academy.

The teaching of RSE will encourage students to:

- Value and respect themselves
- Value and respect others for who they are, not for what they have or what they can do
- Value healthy and **age appropriate** sexual relationships which are based on mutual respect and care
- Value and respect differences in people’s religion, culture, sexual orientation, abilities and background
- Value and respect their own and others’ rights to make choices in sexual relationships whilst accepting responsibility for the consequences of those choices
- Value stable and loving relationships for the nurturing of children and as the basis of a society in which people care for one another

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of RSE in the Axholme Academy

- 3. Equal Opportunities** - all students at The Axholme Academy are entitled to receive RSE in each year, regardless of ability, gender, race, religious belief or grouping. Through RSE we seek to develop a positive view of sexuality. It is our intention that all students have the opportunity to experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical and emotional development, with differentiated provision dependent on ability.

Objective discussion about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preference in relationships will take place in RSE and prejudiced views will be challenged in order to encourage tolerance. Any bullying around sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation arising from prejudice will be dealt with in accordance with the Academy's behaviour and equal opportunities policies.

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate, in order to address the needs of all students and promote full access to the content of RSE.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, the Academy ensures that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. We comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

The Academy ensures that all of their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. We ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. We are aware of the DfE's expectation that all pupils are to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large minority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

The Academy is mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, 12 as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those

with SEND. We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some of our pupils; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors are taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation of RSE lessons - RSE lessons will be monitored via the Academy's Developmental Drop In procedure by the Senior Leadership Team alongside regular student voice surveys. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our Retrieval Point Assessment (RPA) procedure.

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE Coordinator every 3 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

RSE in Key Stage 3

Students build upon the knowledge and confidence developed in Key Stage 2. Teaching should develop students' understanding of the physical and emotional changes which are taking place; they recognise the importance of personal hygiene and begin to look at body image, media influences, healthy and unhealthy relationships, exploitation, arranged and forced marriage as well as FGM and abuse.

RSE in Key Stage 4

Students build upon their learning from Key Stage 3 and develop their knowledge skills and understanding of a range of social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues, such as arranged marriage and FGM, thereby clarifying their own attitudes and opinions through discussions with peers and informed adults, considering the consequences of their actions and decisions, gathering the skills to seek advice, learning to respect the views, needs and rights of others and enabling them to take their place in the arena of adult emotional and physical relationships.

Teaching in Key Stage 4 aims to deepen students' understanding of sexual exploitation, key values within relationships, the advantages of various types of contraception and the signs and symptoms of common STIs; students should be taught about the legal, moral and emotional aspects of consent, pornography, abortion, the physical, emotional and financial challenges relating to having a baby and the need for self-examination in order to protect sexual health.

By the time they have left the Axholme Academy, our students will know:

Families

- 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 minimum age for marriage was raised to 18 to extend existing forced marriage legislation (The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022)
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to the 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.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

- 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 relationships.
- 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

- 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

- 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
- 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 pressuring 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.

Child Protection

The Axholme Academy follows the guidelines and procedures outlined by the North Lincolnshire Local Safeguarding Partnerships - N Lincs **Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS)**. Any concerns should be addressed to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mrs Causier or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) Mrs. Millward. This should be done as quickly as possible. Staff should follow the publicised Disclosure Procedure should a child choose to share information with them concerning potential abuse.

Responsibility of the Principal

The Principal will need to liaise with the Board of Governors and the CS coordinator to ensure that RSE is being taught within its legal requirement. The Principal will need to develop suitable procedures for dealing with any parental request for the withdrawal of their child from RSE lessons, and decide upon suitable alternative arrangements for the supervision or teaching of any students in that position.

Responsibility of the Board of Governors

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the Board of Governors also ensures sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

Responsibility and Information for Parents and Carers

The Axholme Academy recognises that the prime responsibility of bringing up the child rests with their parent or guardian. The Academy also appreciates that parents and carers are key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that maturity brings. The teaching offered by the Academy is complementary and supportive to the role of the parents and carers. Parents and carers do have a right to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, will be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At

this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at secondary level and we believe the content of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught. If this is recognised, then those responsible should be less likely to use their right to withdraw their child from RSE lessons. Parents and carers will be contacted by The Axholme Academy prior to RSE lessons being delivered and a request for withdrawal must be made in writing to the PSHE coordinator. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The PSHE coordinator will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative school work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

CONFIDENTIALITY BETWEEN STAFF AND STUDENTS

Whilst in all years, students' questions will be answered honestly and frankly, ground rules should be set by staff in order to prevent students from talking about named individuals. Students need to be informed that the classroom teachers cannot guarantee confidentiality. **Confidentiality must not be promised** and if a student discloses information, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed.

Procedures for the Involvement of Health Professionals and Visitors to the Academy

The Academy values the important role that the Health Service professionals play in relation to that of the classroom teacher, in relation to young peoples' health, as well as being a welcome extra source of information.

- Voluntary organisations also provide useful information, resources and guidance.
- The Academy will educate students how to use the outside services provided for them, as part of the RSE programme.
- The Academy will obtain relevant leaflets containing basic information, e.g. on contraceptives, STIs and will distribute them to the relevant age groups, in the context of the appropriate lesson. - the CS Coordinator will 'interview' new speakers before they attend a lesson so that the ethos of the Academy's RSE policy is explained and promoted.
- The school nurse regularly visits the Academy , and works closely with parents and relevant staff who may need to be informed of certain information pertaining to a particular child. The school nurse should also be aware of the Academy's RSE policy.

- The school nurse runs a regular drop in clinic and will give appropriate advice on a wide range of issues to young people who ask for it and will liaise with the Academy as appropriate.
- Choices run a regular 'drop-in' clinic during lunchtimes. The time and location of this clinic is clearly advertised within the Academy.

HELPFUL ADDRESSES

Health Promotion Unit

Ashby Clinic Annex
Collum Lane
Ashby
DN16 2SZ
01724 296617

Sexual Health Clinic (Scunthorpe Hospital)

01724 290008

An appointment isn't needed, but waits can be long. There is a special clinic for under 21s on a Thursday from 3.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. but it is advised that people phone for an appointment on a Wednesday afternoon.

Ironstone Centre Telephone: 0300 330 1122

Virgin Care sexual health hub
Ironstone Centre, West Street, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 6HX

NHS Direct Free phone Telephone 0845 46 47

Information and guides to local services

Sexwise A free and confidential telephone helpline for teenagers. Operates from 7 a.m. to midnight to answer teenagers' questions about sex and relationships

www.likeitis A useful website for teenagers of all ages.

National HIV/AIDS Helpline A 24 hour helpline offering confidential advice on any aspect of HIV/AIDS

Freephone 0800 555 777

*In accordance with Safeguarding and Child Protection policies, information cannot remain confidential where an adult suspects that a young person may be at risk. **Staff cannot promise confidentiality to the student. It is not up to staff to investigate the matter. Staff who suspect abuse must see the Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs Causier, or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs Millward before the end of the day, as the student needs to be seen before they go home.**