



# Maplefields Academy

## Relationships, Sex and Education Policy

<b>Accountability:</b> <b>Trustee Committee: Quality of Education</b> <b>SLT: J Walker</b>	<b>Ratified by: Quality of Education</b>
<b>Revised Date: June 2025</b>	<b>Name: Su Bernard</b>
<b>Ratified Date: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025</b>	<b>Signed: <i>Su Bernard</i></b>
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	<b>Chair of Trustees: Howard Reid</b>

### What is Relationship, Sex and Education?

Sex education is defined as learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health.

Sex education is part of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum in our school. When we inform our pupils through sex education about sexual issues, we do this with regard to morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

#### 1. Aims

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

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

#### 2. Statutory requirements

As an all through Academy 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 RSHE, 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.

We also have regard to 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 tier activities

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

### **3. Definition**

Maplefields Academy is a Social Emotional Mental Health school and therefore have children from the age of 4 – 18. All children across the school will all learn about relationships, however from year 6 we will begin to teach aspects of sex education (including puberty) if this is appropriate for the individual pupil.

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. RSHE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

### **4. Curriculum**

Our curriculum is implemented within the subjects and especially PHSE, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary. Circle time and assemblies are used for many of the RSHE areas of curriculum too. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, considering the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Primary sex education (year 6 if appropriate) will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings

### **5. Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Primary Relationship Education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Secondary RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

- In Year 7 in Term 3 and 4 our pupils will receive a concentrated unit of work on sex education.
- Pupils in Year 9 are taught a unit that includes sexual health.
- In Year 10 and 11 pupils are taught units on Emotional Awareness and Anger Management. They also study units on Sexual Diseases and on Relationships.

Ground rules should be set when discussions are likely to be of a sensitive nature. Teachers should be aware of what is appropriate/not appropriate for classroom discussion.

Teachers will also be responsible for the conduct and contribution of STAs during these lessons. Therefore, discussions should take part in teams prior to the lessons.

We teach about sex through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum.

In PSHE we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of the body, and how these work, and we explain to the children what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we teach the children that boys' voices will change during puberty, and we explain menstruation to both boys and girls. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

In science lessons, in all key stages, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of our teaching we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the fact that people are not all the same, and that we need to respect each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes, and the main stages of the human life cycle, in greater depth. In Key Stage 3 pupils learn about the human reproductive systems, fertilisation as the fusion of cells and the development of the embryo. Students learn about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence. They also study how bacteria and viruses affect health. In Key Stage 4 students look at the effect of hormones and their medical uses, the defence mechanisms of the body and how sex is determined in humans.

In Year 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how children's bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

Due to RSE being taught across circle time and assemblies all staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE

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

## **7. Parents' right to withdraw**

Within the Primary phase the parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Although parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE.

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.

Within the secondary phase parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

### **8. The role of other members of the community**

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex education programme. Other people that we call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

### **9. Reporting**

Teachers conduct sex education 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 not try to investigate, but will immediately inform the designated person for child protection issues about their concerns. The head teacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals.

MyConcern is to be used in these situations.

Parents will be informed of sex education, when it will be happening and what will be taught to their children, through the sharing of the long-term plans via the website and attached to the information letter sent home.