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# Policy for Relationships and Health Education

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Prepared by:	Adopted by Board of Trustees
RSE Working party and CEO April/May 19	<b>Summer 2025</b>

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## Statement of intent

All AET policies are written to support our schools and communities. We do this by ensuring they are always in line with our Colleague Values:



Applying these values to everything we do means always acting with integrity, in the interests of others, being honest, open and transparent and putting the safety of our children first.

At The Aspire Educational Trust we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. A key part of this relates to relationships and health education, which must be delivered to every primary-aged pupil. Primary schools also have the option to decide whether pupils are taught sex education.

Relationships education focusses on giving pupils the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. Health education focusses on equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.

We understand our responsibility to deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate and evidence-based relationships, sex and health curriculum for all our pupils. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships, sex and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered.

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Section 80A of the Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2013) 'Science programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'

## 2. Organisation of the curriculum

- 2.1. Every primary school is required to deliver statutory relationships education and health education.
- 2.2. For the purpose of this policy, **"relationships and sex education"** is defined as teaching pupils about healthy, respectful relationships, focussing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online, as well as developing an understanding of human sexuality.
- 2.3. For the purpose of this policy, **"health education"** is defined as teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing, focussing on recognising the link between the two and being able to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- 2.4. The delivery of the relationships education and health education coincide with one another and will be delivered as part of the school's **PSHE curriculum**.
- 2.5. The relationships and health curriculum has been organised in line with the statutory requirements outlined in the DfE (2019) 'Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance.
- 2.6. The relationships and health curriculum takes into account the views of teachers, pupils and parents. We are dedicated to ensuring our curriculum meets the needs of the whole-school community.
- 2.7. The relationships and health curriculum is informed by issues in the school and wider community to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs.
- 2.8. We consult with parents, pupils and staff.
- 2.9. Any parent, teacher or pupil wishing to provide feedback about the curriculum can do so at any time during the academic year by:
  - **Organising a meeting with the headteacher.**

- **Emailing the school**
  - **Submitting written feedback into the suggestions box in the school office.**
- 2.10. The school has organised a curriculum that is age-appropriate for pupils within each year group.
- 2.11. When organising the curriculum, the backgrounds of all pupils will be considered, so that the topics that are covered are taught appropriately..

### **3. Relationships education overview**

#### **Families and people who care for me**

- 3.1. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:
- That families are important for them 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.

#### **Caring friendships**

- 3.2. By the end of primary school, pupils will 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, but 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.
- How to manage conflict.
- How to manage different situations and how to seek help from others if needed.

### **Respectful relationships**

3.3. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
- Which 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 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 the different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying to an adult, and how to seek help.
- What a stereotype is, and how they can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

### **Online relationships**

3.4. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including 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, even when we are anonymous.
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online.
- How to recognise harmful content and contact online, and how to report these.
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information.
- The risks associated with people they have never met.
- How information and data is shared and used online.

### **Being safe**

3.5. By the end of primary school, pupils will 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.
- 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) who 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 and 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 seek advice, for example, from their family, their school and other sources.

## **4. Health education overview**

4.1. The focus at primary level is teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing.

### **Mental wellbeing**

4.2. By the end of primary school pupils will know:

- That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- That there is a normal range of emotions, e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and nervousness.
- The scale of emotions that humans experience in response to different experiences and situations.
- How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, and voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- How isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important they discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.

- Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), extending to who in school they should speak to if they are worried about themselves or others.
- That it is common to experience mental ill health and, for the many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

### **Internet safety and harms**

4.3. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- That for most people, the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- About the benefits of rationing time spent online.
- The risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices.
- The impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others.
- How to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
- The importance of keeping personal information private.
- Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age-restricted.
- That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- How to be a discerning consumer of information online, including understanding that information (inclusive of that from search engines) is ranked, selected and targeted.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

### **Physical health and fitness**

4.4. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this, for example by walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile, or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
- How and when to seek support, including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

### **Healthy eating**

4.5. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:



- What constitutes a healthy diet, including an understanding of calories and other nutritional content.
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating, including obesity, and other behaviours, e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health.

### **Drugs alcohol and tobacco**

4.6. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

### **Health and prevention**

4.7. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss or unexplained changes to the body.
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria and viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of hand washing.
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.

### **Basic first aid**

4.8. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

### **Changing adolescent body**

4.9. By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- About menstrual wellbeing and key facts relating to the menstrual cycle.

## **5. Sex education**

5.1. All pupils must be taught the aspects of sex education outlined in the primary science curriculum – this includes teaching about the main external parts of the

human body, how it changes as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty, and the reproductive process in some plants and animals.

- 5.2. The schools within the Aspire Educational Trust are free to determine whether pupils should be taught sex education beyond what is required of the national curriculum.

## **6. Delivery of the curriculum**

- 6.1. The relationships, sex and health curriculum will be delivered as part of our **curriculum**.
- 6.2. Through effective organisation and delivery of the subject, we will ensure that:
- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size.
  - The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
  - Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.
- 6.3. The curriculum is delivered proactively, such that it addresses issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on children's physical, emotional and sexual development.
- 6.4. Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly the Equality Act 2010, so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.
- 6.5. It is appropriate to teach pupils about LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning and other ), we will ensure that this content is fully integrated into the relationships, sex and health curriculum, rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson.
- 6.6. The school ensures that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages of the pupils, their backgrounds, their developmental stages and any additional needs, such as SEND.
- 6.7. Lesson plans will provide appropriate challenge for pupils and be differentiated for pupils' needs.
- 6.8. Classes may be taught in gender-segregated groups, dependent upon the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, and the cultural background of pupils where it is only appropriate to discuss the body in single gender groups.
- 6.9. Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programme accordingly.
- 6.10. Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriate to the pupil's age.

- 6.11. Teachers will ensure that lesson plans are centred around reducing stigma, particularly in relation to mental wellbeing, and encouraging openness through discussion activities and group work.
- 6.12. Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.
- 6.13. At all points of delivery of this programme, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued.

## **7. Working with external experts**

- 7.1. External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the programme and will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.
- 7.2. The school will ensure all visitor credentials are checked before they are able to participate in delivery of the curriculum, in line with the Visitor Policy.
- 7.3. The school will ensure that the teaching delivered by the external expert fits with the planned curriculum and this policy.
- 7.4. Before delivering the session, the school will discuss the details of the expert's lesson plan and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- 7.5. The school will also ask to see the materials the expert intends to use, as well as a copy of the lesson plan, to ensure it meets all pupils' needs, including those with SEND.
- 7.6. The school will agree with the expert the procedures for confidentiality, ensuring that the expert understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 7.7. The intended use of external experts is to enhance the curriculum delivered by teachers, rather than as a replacement for teachers.

## **8. Curriculum links**

- 8.1. The school seeks opportunities to draw links between relationships, sex and health education and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning.
- 8.2. Relationships, sex and health education will be linked to the following subjects in particular:
  - **Science** – pupils learn about the main external parts of the body and changes to the body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty.
  - **Computing and ICT** – pupils learn about e-safety, including how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private and how to access help and support.

- **PE** – pupils explore various physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and understand how exercise can lead to healthier lifestyles.
- **Citizenship** – pupils learn about the requirements of the law, their responsibilities and the possible consequences of their actions.
- **PSHE** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.

## 9. **Withdrawing from the subjects**

- 9.1. Relationships and health education are statutory at primary and parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from the subjects.
- 9.2. As sex education is not statutory at primary level (other than what must be taught as part of the science curriculum), parents have the right to request to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education curriculum.
- 9.3. The headteacher will automatically grant a parent's request to withdraw their child from sex education, other than the content that must be taught as part of the science curriculum; however, the headteacher will discuss the request with the parent and, if appropriate, their child, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.
- 9.4. The headteacher will discuss with the parent, the benefits of receiving this important education and any adverse effects that withdrawal may have on the pupil – this could include, for example, social and emotional effects of being excluded.
- 9.5. The headteacher will keep a record of the discussion between themselves, the pupil and the parent.
- 9.6. The headteacher will grant a parent's request to withdraw their child from sex education, other than the content that must be taught as part of the science curriculum.
- 9.7. The parent will be informed in writing of the headteacher's decision.
- 9.8. Where a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the headteacher will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate alternative education.

## 10. **Monitoring and review**

- 10.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the relationships, sex and health education subject leader and/or Principal/headteacher.
- 10.2. This policy will also be reviewed in light of any changes to statutory guidance, feedback from parents, staff or pupils, and issues in the school or local area that may need addressing.
- 10.3. The Board of Trustees is responsible for approving this policy.

- 10.4. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, parents and, where necessary, pupils.