

## **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy**

### **Smith's Wood Academy**

|                        |                                          |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Document Owner:</b> | <b>Kate Tucker, Assistant, Principal</b> |
| <b>Ratified By:</b>    | <b>Stephen Huntington, Principal</b>     |
| <b>Date Ratified:</b>  | <b>September 2025</b>                    |
| <b>Review Date:</b>    | <b>September 2028</b>                    |

## Contents

|     |                                                                                |    |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1.  | Fairfax Multi Academy Trust Values .....                                       | 3  |
| 2.  | Policy Statement .....                                                         | 3  |
| 3.  | Introduction .....                                                             | 3  |
| 4.  | Aims .....                                                                     | 3  |
| 5.  | Subject content and delivery .....                                             | 4  |
| 6.  | Roles and responsibilities.....                                                | 6  |
| 7.  | Inclusion.....                                                                 | 6  |
| 8.  | Right to be removed from sex education.....                                    | 7  |
| 9.  | Working with external agencies.....                                            | 7  |
| 10. | Safeguarding and confidentiality .....                                         | 7  |
| 11. | Links with other policies .....                                                | 8  |
| 12. | Links with other policies .....                                                | 8  |
|     | Appendix A: Curriculum adaptations - Local Context: Smith's Wood Academy ..... | 9  |
|     | Appendix B: Curriculum Overview .....                                          | 10 |

## **1. Fairfax Multi Academy Trust Values**

- 1.1 Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust's (FMAT) policies and procedures are written in accordance with our statutory obligations. They also align to our mission to "enrich the lives and transform the futures" of the students we serve, whilst reflecting each of our values - excellence, dedication, ambition, integrity, and tradition.

## **2. Policy Statement**

- 2.1 This policy follows the statutory guidance from the Department for Education. The purpose of this Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) policy is to ensure that all pupils receive high-quality, age-appropriate, and inclusive education that supports their physical, emotional, and social development. RSE is a vital part of preparing young people for the challenges and responsibilities of adult life, helping them to develop healthy, respectful relationships and to understand the importance of consent, safety, and mutual respect.

## **3. Introduction**

- 3.1 This policy has been produced in consultation with key stakeholders, including senior leadership, the safeguarding officers and Local Governing Bodies. Parents and carers have also been informed about the policy and the policy is available for parents and carers via the academy websites. The policy will be reviewed on a 2 yearly basis to ensure all content is relevant and up to date.

## **4. Aims**

- 4.1 At FMAT we aim to develop articulate, resilient and ambitious students, regardless of background, with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to excel in modern Britain. Effective relationship and sex education (RSE) makes a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by students to establish and maintain positive, healthy relationships. It enables young people to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.
- 4.2 Relationship and sex education at FMAT will ensure that young people are healthy, happy and safe. We aim to enable students to make safe decisions and give them the information and tools they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all types, not just intimate relationships. It will enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like, including resisting pressure, what makes a good friend, a successful marriage, and respect (for ourselves and others). The curriculum will teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships, which will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- 4.3 RSE is also about the physical, emotional, social, moral and legal dimensions of human sexuality as well as factual teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health. RSE is not just about having the knowledge, it is also about having the skills to make the right decisions.
- 4.3 This policy will provide clear progression throughout each key stage in Relationship Education. We adapt our curriculum based on our context to ensure that we meet all aspects of our local need, please see appendix A for further information. We will build on

this foundation and as the students grow, at the appropriate time students will look at intimate relationships.

4.5 In addition, FMAT believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life
- Be an entitlement for all young people
- Encourage every student to contribute to make our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn
- Be set within this wider academy context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

## **5. Subject content and delivery**

- 5.1 RSE will be set in the context of a wider whole-academy approach to supporting students to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond the academy, for example in PSHE, RE, science and computer science lessons. The academy acknowledges that age-appropriate teaching can help students prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of students both at the academy and in society. The curriculum on relationships and sex will complement and be supported by the Trust and Academies wider policies on Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, SEND provision, Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) and Drug Education.
- 5.2 Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.
- 5.3 Should students have a question they don't feel able to ask in the lesson, the academy will have a 'PSHE question box' for students to submit their question to the PSHE lead who will then address the matter.
- 5.4 The curriculum has been planned and designed using a variety of different sources, such as the Department for Education and the PSHE Association.

5.5 We will cover the following, in-line with the Department for Education's guidance. Further detail can be found in appendix B:

**By the end of primary phase**

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

**By the end of secondary phase**

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- The Law

- 5.6 The subject lead for PHSE will work closely with colleagues to ensure RSE is being taught in a safe and supportive manner, where the students are making healthy, happy and safe choices. As part of this process, students will be consulted throughout the year on the content being covered and whether they feel it is best suited to them.
- 5.7 As with all learning the effectiveness of the curriculum will be monitored throughout and students' progress will be evident in their PSHE books, for example students may be asked to produce a spider diagram on a topic at the start of the unit and then add to it at the end with information they now know. This will show the content is suited to those in the lesson. Along with this, staff will be asked for feedback at the end of each topic and the lead for PSHE will meet with the safeguarding lead in the academy to ensure there is no additional area which needs to be covered. Whilst the content has been outlined in the above table, the content is subject to change due to the needs of the students.
- 5.8 The Academy Associates have a responsibility for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationship and Sex Education Policy.
- 5.9 Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. This includes evaluating and commenting on the academy's sex and relationship education policy, and on support and staff development, training and delivery.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Governing Body**

- Ensure the RSE policy is fit for purpose and fulfils its legal obligation
- Ensure parents and carers have had a consultation period before the implementation of the policy

### **The Principal**

- Monitor the implementation of the policy
- Ensure all staff are informed of the policy and the responsibilities they have
- Ensure staff have time to receive up to date training
- Work with parents and carers to keep them informed of the curriculum and ensure all information is clear, including to those who wish for their child to be withdrawn.

### **PSHE lead**

- Monitor the implementation of the policy and delivery of content with the Principal
- Ensure Continued Profession Development (CPD) opportunities are provided for staff, specifically those who are delivering RSE.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of the curriculum in place to all students
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) to ensure the curriculum is most relevant to our students

### **Staff**

- Ensure the classroom is a safe place with established ground rules prior to delivering the content
- Ensure they are aware of the up to date statutory requirements and policy
- Ensure resources are appropriate for those students they are teaching
- Emphasise the importance of RSE in relation to making informed choices
- Ensure all teaching is unbiased
- Where appropriate they direct students to seek advice from an appropriate agency or individual

### **Parents and Carers**

- The academy recognises the key role that parents and carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents are the first educators of their children as you have the most significant influence in enabling their child to grow and mature, forming healthy relationships.

## **7. Inclusion**

- 7.1 We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns and action these where possible.
- 7.2 We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of students from different religious backgrounds. We will respond to parental requests and concerns and action these where possible.
- 7.3 We will ensure that all young people receive RSE, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

As far as is appropriate, young people with SEND follow the same RSE programme as all other students. Careful consideration is given concerning the level of differentiation needed, and in some cases the content or delivery will be adapted. Learning support assistants work with individual students where required, sometimes on a one to one basis.

- 7.4 We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

## **8. Right to be removed from sex education**

- 8.1 Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE (they cannot be withdrawn from relationship education). The academy, before granting any such request, will require the Principal to discuss the request with the parents and carers. This is to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum at which point parents and carers are welcome to review any RSE resources the academy uses. If you wish to withdraw your child from sex education then a letter or email must be sent to the Principal of the academy
- 8.2 Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the Trust will respect the parents' and carers' request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the academy should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.
- 8.3 The Principal and PSHE lead will ensure that where a student is excused from sex education, the student will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

## **9. Working with external agencies**

- 9.1 Where appropriate, academies may involve visitors and other outside agencies to help and support RSE provision within the academy. This can be as part of the planning process as well as with the delivery of RSE. When visitors are used this is to complement the RSE Programme, they will never be used to substitute or replace planned provision. When visitors and other outside agencies help and support in the delivery of RSE, there will always be a member of staff present during the lesson and the content will always be looked at prior to the lesson taking place.
- 9.2 The Academy will also ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Trust's Safeguarding Policy.

## **10. Safeguarding and confidentiality**

- 10.1 Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Staff are not legally bound to inform parents and carers or Principal of any disclosure, however any necessary information will be passed to the academy designated safeguarding officer.

- 10.2 In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the member of staff will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.
- 10.3 Health professionals in the academy are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the academy's Confidentiality policy.
- 10.4 Through the academy nurse and other key members of staff (including the PSHE co-ordinator), students are signposted towards confidential sources of support for relationships and sexual health issues in their area.

## **11. Links with other policies**

11.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust/Academy policies:

- PSHE policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Drug Education policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- SEND policy

## **12. Links with other policies**

- 12.1 This policy is reviewed at least every three years by the Trust. The Trust will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.



## Appendix A: Curriculum adaptations - Local Context: Smith's Wood Academy

The RSE curriculum is adapted at each academy based on local context and need.

Smith's Wood is an 11-16 academy located in North Solihull. The academy serves the local area of Smith's Wood, and surrounding areas, including Chelmsley Wood and Kingshurst. In comparison with the other 45 areas of Birmingham, over the last year Smith's Wood ranks 5<sup>th</sup> for the highest crime rate, with Criminal Damage, Anti-Social Behaviour and Violence/Sexual offences being amongst the highest in the city. Approximately 60% of students live under the Solihull Local Authority and the other 40% under Birmingham.

The academy has a deprivation indication of (0.4) which is twice the national average according to the governments Indices of Deprivation mapping tool.

The student cohort is predominantly White British, being 68% of the school cohort. 32% of students are from a minority ethnic group, with 69% of this group being White and Black Caribbean.

Smith's Wood is also a fully accessible mainstream school. The proportion of students with Special Educational Needs is well above National Average. However, the proportion of students with EHCPs is slightly below the national average with 11 students on a plan.

| Measure                                                       | Smith's Wood | National Average | Comment                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Deprivation indicator                                         | 0.4          | 0.20             | Twice the NA           |
| SEND Support                                                  | 24.6%        | 10.8%            | Higher than NA         |
| SEND Statement (EHC plan)                                     | 1.40%        | 2.2%             | Lower than NA          |
| Students claiming FSM6                                        | 65%          | 26.9%            | More than twice the NA |
| Service Families                                              |              |                  |                        |
| Student stability                                             | 89%          | 91.6             | In line with NA        |
| Minority ethnic groups                                        | 32.40%       | 31.8             | Higher than NA         |
| Students believed not to have English as their first language | 9.5%         | 17.5%            | Much lower than NA     |
| Religious denomination                                        | 9            |                  |                        |
| Looked After Children LAC                                     | 2.00%        |                  |                        |

## **Appendix B: Curriculum Overview**

### **By the end of the primary phase**

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

Students 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

#### **Caring friendships**

Students 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**

Students 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**

Students 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**

Students 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.

### **By the end of secondary school**

#### **Families**

Students should know:

- 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 – for example, 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 characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to 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), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

#### **Online and media**

Students should know:

- 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, for example 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**

Students should know:

- 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**

Students should know:

- 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, for example 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 pressurising 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 and 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.

### **The Law**

Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation

- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM).