



# Melksham Oak Community School Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

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Key Document details:

Author: [Ruth Perry](#)

Owner: [Ruth Perry/Sharon Kirwan](#)

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

At Melksham Oak Community School, we are aware that today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way in order to fulfil their potential as healthy global citizens.

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 Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. The regulations also make Health Education compulsory in Academies.

This policy should be read in conjunction with these other Melksham Oak Community School Policies:

Safeguarding and Child Protection  
Behaviour  
Anti-bullying  
Transgender  
SEND  
Equality and Diversity Statement  
E Safety and Online Safeguarding  
PSHEE and Citizenship

Governors will monitor the implementation of this policy in keeping with the Scheme of Delegation and will feedback to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL), Policy Owner, and to the Local Governing Body, (LGB) where clarity and potential non-compliances are found. Evidence will be gathered through the process of school visits and ratification of the policy by the LGB.

## 2 AIMS OF RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION

The aim of RSE and Health Education is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage, civil partnership or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This 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.

Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

Our RSE AND HEALTH EDUCATION policy will provide clear progression from what is taught in the primary curriculum. We will build on the foundation of learning and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught intimate relationships, pupils will also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. We understand that pupils will regardless of chronological age be at different points of maturity, cognitive ability and life experiences throughout their childhood years which will impact on their needs for relationships, sex and health education. To ensure appropriate access to the curriculum for all we will endeavour to match the curriculum delivery to the pupils needs to ensure that all pupils have the knowledge and skills to make positive and informed decisions regardless of their starting points.

**Teaching of RSE and Health Education at Melksham Oak Community School will enable pupils to:**

- distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.
- understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect and to understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing.
- believe they can achieve goals and that in order to achieve those goals they must stick at the tasks despite the challenges they may face.
- be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way.
- recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk.
- recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and when to report issues to keep them safe online.
- within the law, be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

## **DELIVERY OF RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

Melksham Oak Community School acknowledges that high-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching can help pupils prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils both at school and in society.

RSE and Health Education will be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. The curriculum on relationships and sex will complement and be supported by our wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, anti-bullying and safeguarding. RSE and Health Education will sit within the context of our broader ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally; and its pastoral care system.

The curriculum on health education will similarly complement and be supported by our education on healthy lifestyles through physical education, food technology, science and extra-curricular activities. The promotion of healthy living is also facilitated through Manor Catering to ensure that pupils are able to make nutritional food choices throughout their time at Melksham Oak.

We will deliver the content in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons. Teaching will include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to practise applying and embedding new knowledge so that it can be used skilfully and confidently in real life situations.

The Faculty Leader for Humanities will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure RSE AND HEALTH EDUCATION programmes complement each other and do not duplicate, content covered in national curriculum subjects including science and ICT/computing.

### **Humanities Faculty: Delivery of Relationships, Sex and Health Education**

The Humanities Faculty is responsible for delivering modules on RSE and Health Education in KS3. The classes are all mixed ability. In KS4 RSE and Health Education is delivered through the Tutorial programme, assemblies and through collapsed curriculum ACORNS days. Our curriculum map closely follows the one recommended by the PSHE Association.

#### **In Year 7 the following topics are covered:**

##### **Health and Puberty**

- Healthy routines
- Influences on health
- Puberty
- Unwanted contact
- Female Genital Mutilation FGM

##### **Building Relationships**

- Self-worth
- Romance and friendships (including online)
- Relationship boundaries

#### **In Year 8 the following topics are covered:**

##### **Emotional Well being**

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing including body image and coping strategies

##### **Identity and Relationships**

- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Consent
- Sexting

- Introduction to contraception

**In Year 9 the following topics are covered**

**Respectful Relationships**

- Families and parenting
- Healthy relationships
- Conflict resolution
- Relationship changes

**Intimate Relationships**

- Relationships and sex education including consent, contraception, the risks of STIs and attitudes to pornography.

**In Year 10 this topic is covered as part of GCSE RS**

- Abortion: current legal position / range of beliefs and opinions/alternatives including adoption and fostering

**Science Faculty: Delivery of Relationships, Sex and Health Education**

In general, it is advisable that this aspect of the curriculum is delivered by a teacher with a good knowledge of the class. Units related to reproduction are not taught at the start of a new year. Staff delivering sex education need to feel knowledgeable, confident and aware of their responsibilities.

**In Year 7 the following issues are covered in a module titled 'Reproduction':**

- Correct terminology for the parts of the body involved with sexual reproduction.
- Human reproductive systems unite male sex cells (sperm) and female sex cells (eggs) to produce a fertilised egg cell with genes from both parents.
- The fertilised egg cell divides repeatedly to produce an embryo/foetus and its life support system – the placenta.
- Conception and contraception (as a means of preventing conception).
- Changes during adolescence and puberty.

**In Year 8 the following issues are covered in a module titled 'Genetics and evolution'**

- Genetic inheritance and environmental inheritance.
- Continuous and discontinuous variation.

**As part of the GCSE Science courses the following issues are covered:**

- The key features of meiosis and mitosis, where they are used and the key differences between them.
- Sexual and asexual reproduction - how sexual reproduction gives rise to variation.
- How sexual and some genetic diseases are inherited and transmitted in humans.
- Reasons for variation between human beings, both genetic and environmental, and the need to be understanding and tolerant about the differences in others without prejudice or discrimination.

**Triple science students also learn about:**

- Selective breeding
- Genetic engineering
- Cloning

**Technology Faculty: Delivery of Relationships, Sex and Health Education**

**The following are covered in an Introductory unit and in e- safety units in Year 7 and in the Social Media unit in Year 8**

- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
- Pupils' rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- 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 wouldn't 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
- How to identify characteristics of spam and phishing emails.

#### **4. PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)**

- RSE and Health education will be accessible for all pupils. High quality teaching is differentiated and personalised, this is the starting point to ensure accessibility for all pupils.
- We will also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when preparing these subjects for pupils 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 can also be a priority for some pupils, for example some with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs or learning disabilities.
- For some pupils there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meeting the specific needs of children at different development stages.

#### **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- All staff are informed of the policy and the responsibilities included within the policy;
- All teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support subjects;
- The subjects are staffed and timetabled in a way to ensure that Melksham Oak Community school fulfils its legal obligations;
- The teaching of RSE and Health Education is monitored to ensure that it is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- Melksham Oak Community School works with parents/carers when planning and delivering RSE and Health Education to pupils;
- Clear information is provided to parents/carers on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.

##### **All staff will ensure that:**

- Expectations are established with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or breach of confidentiality;
- All students are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence and support;
- At all times teaching will take place in the context of an explicit moral framework.
- All points of view they may express during the course of teaching RSE and Health Education are unbiased.
- They avoid any discussions which directly relate to their own personal sexual experience, orientation, religious belief or opinions (e.g. on controversial matters such as abortion) and ensure that pupils are made aware that people may hold different views and that it is the role of the teacher to present the information in such a way that they can confidently make up their own minds.
- They avoid a situation where a teacher and pupil are having a 'delicate discussion' alone, particularly if advice is sought.
- The teaching of RSE and Health Education is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.

- The emphasis of teaching RSE and Health Education will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices.
- Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSE and health education.
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is inappropriate for staff to give pupils personal advice on matters such as contraception or answer questions about something they feel insufficiently knowledgeable or confident.
- Where a pupil has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications of their behaviour. **The member of staff should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, following the school's safeguarding procedures.**

#### **Parents/Carers:**

At Melksham Oak Community School, we acknowledge the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. Therefore, we ask that parents/carers will be.

- Encouraged to contribute to the development of RSE and Health Education of their child.
- Able to discuss any concerns with appropriate staff at Melksham Oak Community School.

## **6 THE RIGHT TO BE EXCUSED FROM SEX EDUCATION**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE and Health Education. Before granting any such request, Melksham Oak Community School will require the Principal to discuss the request with the parent and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents' 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 school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

The Principal will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

There is no right to withdraw from the national curriculum and topics relating to reproduction, for example, covered in Science.

## **7 USING OUTSIDE VISITORS**

The school may use outside visitors to help support the SRE programme. These visitors may include health professionals, social workers, youth workers, peer educators, theatre groups etc Visitors will be made aware, by the person organising the visit, of:

- Their purpose and role within the school's programme
- The boundaries of their input
- The school's RSE and Health Education policy, Confidentiality policy and the planned RSE and Health Education programme
- The need to plan and agree work with the teacher and identify learning outcomes
- Explicit lines of accountability between the visitor and the school
- Prior to the visit, parents will be informed of the objectives of the visit and the name and role of the visitor/s.

## 7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- RSE and Health Education will be monitored by the Faculty Leader of Humanities and the Faculty Leaders of Science and Technology in the first instance, and will be overseen by the Senior Leadership Team. The SENDCo will be consulted for those children with special educational needs.
- A member of the Governors Education Committee will have a link role between the school and the governing body.

This policy will be placed on the school website and the full programmes of study are available on request to parents through the Principal and the Faculty Leader of Humanities.

This document was last reviewed and updated on September 8th 2021

The next scheduled review of this document is July 2022

Signed:... Alan Henderson

(Head teacher/Principal)

Date:

Signed:... Moira Laffey

(Chair of Governors)

Date:



