

Relationships and Sexual Health Education Policy

Reviewed Date: September 2022

Next Review Date: September 2023

Background and Context

Thornhill Community Academy is a mixed comprehensive school with approximately 900 students on roll, serving the communities of Thornhill and Savile Town in Dewsbury and North Kirklees, and has an ethnic population of around 60%. The ethnic population is mainly of Pakistani or Indian heritage. The Academy is very mixed in terms of socio-economic background and academic ability – around a quarter of students are eligible to receive free school meals and around the same figure have special educational needs.

At Thornhill we believe that education should be an enjoyable experience which prepares young people for life in modern Britain. The Academy is committed to the Health and Wellbeing of all its students.

This Policy is aimed at all staff, students, parents, carers, governors and partner agencies working with the Academy.

Revised Department for Education statutory guidance will state that from September 2020, all secondary schools must deliver relationships and sex education. The parental right to withdraw pupils from RSE remains in primary and secondary education, for aspects of sex education which are not part of the Science curriculum.

Aims and Objectives of the Relationship and Sexual Health Education policy

The overall aim of education at the Academy is summarised in Section 1 of the 1988 Education Act by which we are charged with delivering a curriculum which “promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical developments of students at the Academy and of society; and prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life”.

This policy is part of the SMSC Policy and is also linked to the confidentiality and Child Protection Policy.

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the government committed to making Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) statutory in all secondary schools, including local authority maintained schools, academies, free schools and independent schools.

We recognise that our students may become sexually mature adults and therefore, our aim is to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary knowledge, self-esteem, awareness and understanding of sexuality and sexual matters to enjoy fulfilling and responsible personal relationships.

Effective sex and relationship education 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 their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. It builds up knowledge and skills which are particularly important today because of the many different and conflicting pressures on young people.

The Governing Body, in conjunction with the Headteacher and in consultation with staff, students and parents has developed policies which reflect the parents' wishes and the community they serve.

Relationships and Sexual Health Education is a lifelong learning experience about Physical, Moral and Emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and respectful relationships, tolerance, respect, love and care. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

The objectives of this policy are:-

- To promote a healthy and positive attitude to sex and gender issues within a broad and clear moral framework.
- To introduce and enhance the personal and social skills which students need in order to make informed decisions.
- To ensure that understanding of sexual facts and issues occurs at appropriate times in student's development.

Achieving the Aims of the Policy

The Relationships and Sexual Health Education programme will be incorporated into the Academy PSHCE programme and is supported by the National Curriculum Science Schemes of Work. It also contributes to Academy improvements in the Healthy School Programme.

The Needs of the Students

The Relationships and Sexual Health Education programme will be tailored to the age, physical and emotional maturity, gender, cultural and social needs of the students. All material is reviewed and delivered at an age-appropriate level.

Teaching and Learning Styles

Teaching methods will take into account the differing needs of students and will include a variety of styles and approaches, this could range from small group work, class discussion to individual learning tasks.

The planning and delivery of Relationships and Sexual Health Education is the responsibility of the SMSC Co-ordinator in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

Sexual Health Education itself will be taught by a number of staff involved in the delivery of Science and SMSC to varying degrees of complexity and depth.

Usually, relationships education will be part of the PSHCE programme, whilst certain issues will be taught in a cross-curricular way as part of Science, Physical Education, Religious and Social Issues, English and Drama.

When a specific lesson is taught the teacher will ensure that the appropriate tone and atmosphere is established in the classroom before proceeding. In some cases ground rules will be shared with the class. The language used in the classroom will be the appropriate, scientific terminology. Methods may vary topic to topic and will depend on resources available. The Academy will encourage discussion and clarification of understanding and values.

Boys and girls will normally be taught together. However, for certain aspects, such as menstruation, they may be taught separately to allow for more personal and detailed questions to be asked without embarrassment. The Academy will encourage discussion and questions will be dealt with at a level appropriate to the students' age, understanding and level of maturity.

Thornhill Community Academy has and will continue to liaise with our feeder schools to aid progression and continuity.

Confidentiality

Academy staff and external agency support staff, such as health professionals, will respect student confidentiality. However, if safeguarding issues arise, the appropriate procedures will be followed and information/disclosures will be passed on. The student should always be informed that, in this case, confidentiality cannot be maintained.

Moral Framework of the Relationships and Sexual Health Education

Given the broad background and multi-cultural nature of the Academy, and the society for which we are preparing young people, it is important that students are taught within a moral framework which prepares them to understand and to contribute to society. Therefore the following moral values, alongside the British Values, will inform our sex and relationship education throughout the Academy:

- Honesty
- Understanding and awareness of differences
- Care and compassion
- Respect for all
- Love and affection

- Equal Opportunities
- Fairness and justice
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance
- Individual Liberty

The Academy will promote a positive attitude towards the multi-cultural nature of society and the multi-faceted nature of family and personal relationships today.

Equal Opportunities

The Academy is committed to equal opportunities and therefore care will be taken to select teaching materials and methods which:

- Give all students access to a broad and balanced curriculum and take into account different learning styles and needs
- Value different types of families and life styles
- Encourage young people to value one another as individuals
- Actively challenge and question prejudice and stereotyping

Content

The Academy follows the Department for Education Guidance alongside using the PSHE Association Framework. Relationships and Sex Education has links with other areas of the Curriculum. The following areas of focus can be found within the relevant Schemes of Learning.

Equal Opportunities	Childcare
Fairness and Justice	Sexual abuse
Love and affection	Celibacy
Understanding & awareness of differences	Marriage
Assertiveness	HIV/Aids
Respect	Human pregnancy & birth
Gender roles and stereotypes	Sexual transmitted infections
Making & Maintaining friendships	Sex and love
Decision-making skills	Contraception
Communication skills	Abortion
Parental responsibility	Risk behaviour
Emotional & physical changes at puberty	

Under the new DfE guidance, there should also be opportunities to learn about grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, which should also address coercive and controlling behaviour. The physical and emotional damage that can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM) should also be addressed. Schools should continue to work closely with parents when planning and delivering RSE.

Continuous Professional Development and Training

The Academy recognises and is committed to the professional development of its staff. The Academy will use in-house training where appropriate and will draw on the resources, skills

and knowledge of health professionals and other external advisers. The Academy will also use centralised training facilities and external agencies when appropriate. This will allow staff to be confident and competent in delivering the Relationship and Sex Education programme. Particularly, attention will be paid to keeping staff up to date and inducting staff new to the Academy.

The Use of External Support

The Academy will utilise the skills and expertise of its professional community such as health professionals. It should be clearly understood however, that such professionals are not a replacement for teachers but are a welcome supplement to the main Relationship and Sexual Health Education curriculum. Furthermore, they will be made aware of this policy and be bound by it.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Academy will maintain a rigorous and robust procedure of monitoring and evaluating the Relationship and Sexual Health Education programme by:

- Observations of SMSC Lessons
- Student Voice from a range of KS3 and KS4 students
- Periodic review and discussions by the Senior Leadership Team link member of staff with Year Leaders and the SMSC Co-ordinator.
- Formal annual review process.
- Annual report to the Governor's Curriculum, Parents, Students, SEND & Community Committee.

The Academy, Parents and Community Links

The Academy regards parents and the community as essential partners in Relationships and Sexual Health Education and that the effectiveness of such education will be enhanced if parents, community leaders and the Academy can act together. To this end, the Academy will:

- Use questionnaires to seek views of parents
- Conduct periodically an audit into the Relationship and Sex Education Curriculum
- Consult Governors
- Consult local community and faith leaders to ascertain their views

Withdrawal Procedures

- Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of **Relationships Education** or **Health Education**.
- Parents will be able to withdraw their child (following a formal discussion with the Headteacher) from any or all aspects of Sex Education, other than those which are part of the science curriculum, up to and until three terms before the age of 16.

- After that point, guidance states that *'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.'*
- Where pupils are withdrawn from sex education, schools should document the process and will have to *'ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal'*.

In cases where parents wish to use their statutory right to withdraw their children from sex education, the Academy will:

- Explain to parents exactly what is to be taught and how. This can be found on the Thornhill Community Academy website.
- Explain that the student may gain an inaccurate, secondary education through peer discussion.
- Make it clear that honest answers will be given to unanticipated questions about sexual issues covered within the Academy policy.
- If parents still wish for their child to be withdrawn, this will be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team and permission is at the Headteacher's discretion.
- If the child is withdrawn, they will be given appropriate, purposeful work, however, this time cannot be given over to core subjects.

Complaints

Complaints about the Relationships and Sexual Health Education Policy should be made in the first instance to the Academy's SMSC Co-Ordinator. If this does not result in satisfaction, the parents should arrange a meeting with the Senior Leadership Team.

Dissemination of the Policy

- The policy will appear in a shortened form on the Academy website
- Copies will be given to every member of the Governing Body

Management and Co-ordination

Management and co-ordination of the Relationship and Sexual Health Education is the responsibility of the SMSC Co-ordinator.

Responsibility for Relationships and Sexual Health Education

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation in the Academy. This responsibility includes liaison with the Governing Body, parents, community leaders and external bodies.

How the Policy was Put Together

- Initial meeting with the Headteacher and the SMSC Co-ordinator following revised Department for Education statutory guidance
- Staff provided with information.
- Questionnaires sent out to staff, students and parents
- Parents' views sought at Parents' Evening
- Governors' informed through Governors' Curriculum meeting
- Report issued following analysis of audit and questionnaires.
- Student Council consulted
- Draft Policy drawn up following a further meeting with SRE Co-ordinators
- Draft Policy discussed by SLT, staff and Year Leaders
- Governor approval at full Governors' meeting

EQUALITY IMPACT AUDIT AND ACTION PLAN

Put X in the PLUS column to indicate if you judge that the policy has a positive impact on a group.

Put X in the neutral column to indicate if you judge that the policy has a neutral impact on a group.

Put X in the MINUS column to indicate if you judge that the policy has a negative impact on a group.

In making a judgement *due regard* has been paid to the requirement to:

- i. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization
- ii. Advance equality of opportunity
- iii. Foster good relations

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS		PLUS	NEUTRAL	MINUS	ACTION
1	Age	x			
2	Disability		x		
3	Gender Reassignment	x			
4	Marriage and Civil Partnership	x			
5	Pregnancy and Maternity		x		
6	Race		x		
7	Religion or Belief		x		
8	Gender	x			
9	Sexual Orientation	x			
Other					