

## Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

### Intent

From September 2020 Relationships and Health Education is compulsory for all primary schools. Relationships, Sex and Health Education is compulsory for secondary schools. At Ash Lea School we recognise that pupils need relationship and sex education that is relevant, accessible, and appropriate to their individual needs. We aim to provide pupils with knowledge and understanding of all kinds of relationships, including recognising the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and how to seek help if needed.

We expect our pupils to form positive, tolerant relationships and teach them about respect for themselves and others and we aim to prepare pupils for the physical and emotional challenges of growing up. We aim to teach our pupils the importance of keeping their bodies healthy and having good mental health. Pupils will also learn about online and offline safety.

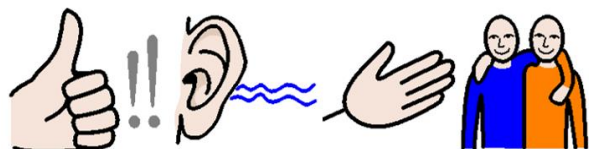
### Provision

RSHE will be taught in every group throughout the school, according to the age, developmental levels and needs of the pupils. The curriculum we deliver is age-appropriate and progressive, building the children's knowledge, understanding and skills year on year. The progressive schemes of work are matched to the pupils' developmental levels and will allow for progression in levels of skills and understanding. These schemes of work can be made available to any parents by request.

Below is a list of topics covered by our RSHE programme:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical Health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention of harm
- Basic First Aid
- Changing adolescent body

Although all students will receive teaching in all areas of RSHE, within the three generalised areas of health and well-being, living in the wider world, and relationships, Ash Lea School is aware that a 'one size fits all' method will be unsuitable for all pupils. A differentiated curriculum is already in place for all teaching and learning. In summary:



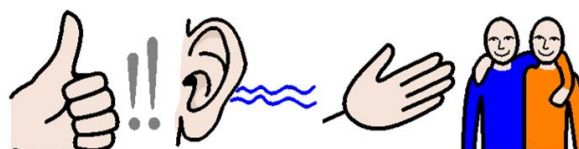
Curriculum pathway	Curriculum links to RSHE	Summary of RSHE provision
Pre-formal and Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My body</li> <li>• My Communication</li> <li>• My World</li> <li>• My Creativity</li> <li>• My Personal, Social and Emotional Development</li> </ul>	Discrete RSHE sessions will be used where necessary, and a holistic approach through everyday emotional, and relational development, and alongside supporting independence and personal care will inform a large proportion of RSHE provision.
Semi-formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My Body</li> <li>• My Communication</li> <li>• My World</li> <li>• My Creativity</li> <li>• My Personal, Social and Emotional Development</li> </ul>	Everyday emotional, relational, and physical support will form an invaluable basis for RSHE provision, alongside regular discrete sessions that focus on specific topics and areas of the RSHE schemes of work.
Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science</li> <li>• PE</li> <li>• Personal, Social and Emotional Development</li> </ul>	Discrete RSHE sessions will be taught. Local and national awareness programmes such as the DARE project in Nottinghamshire.

## Teaching and Learning

All teachers have responsibility for planning and delivering RSHE, according to the individual needs, ages and developmental levels of their pupils. All staff at Ash Lea have the responsibility to equip and support pupils to build positive relationships and stay safe. Everyone involved in the teaching of RSHE will follow the school policy.

Ash Lea School recognises that the needs of its' pupils vary greatly, both within individual class groups and across the school. Teaching throughout Ash Lea is focused on helping children to continue becoming the best that they can be, and staff will use a variety of approaches in order to support the individual needs of pupils, including;

- 1:1 support through the day to day learning surrounding managing relationships with others, understanding risk, and understanding the body (including support and development in personal care).
- Discussions with parents during IEP meetings (and as needed throughout the year) about the support needed to equip pupils in their emotional, relational, and physical development.
- The use of discrete lessons, focusing on particular aspects of the RSHE curriculum
- The use of discussion and questioning, appropriate materials and role play
- The use of assemblies, visitors, and specialist outside agencies
- Promoting the school values in all classes
- Discussions with parents to equip and support them as they educate their children in these areas at home. For many families with children with SEND, navigating relationships,



puberty, sexuality, and health can be daunting and difficult. The school recognises our role as part of the 'team around the child', and the need to support the families of our pupils.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of RSHE. A balanced and non-judgmental approach will be taken. Teachers, and all those contributing to RSHE will work to the agreed values within this policy.

## Equal opportunities

Every child is entitled to receive SRE, regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability, sexuality, language, special needs, or whether they are disadvantaged and looked after children. It is our intention that all children can experience a programme of SRE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development, including differentiated provision if required.

In compliance with the 2010 Equality Act, we ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBTQ+). Inclusive RSHE fosters good relations between pupils, tackles all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promotes understanding and respect.

We also have a legal duty to promote equality and combat bullying (which includes homophobic, sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying).

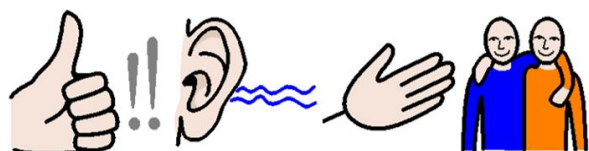
## Specific Issues

### Parental consultation

We work closely alongside parents in order that they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education and fully support us. If you have any questions about the content of what your child is being taught, then please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher who will discuss this with you further. Parents and carers have the right to see sample materials used within the teaching of RHSE and this can be arranged in advance with your child's teacher.

### Withdrawal from RSE lessons

Whilst we always try to work with parents to explore their views, we also accept that parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child from the sex education elements of our programme (other than that which would come within the science National Curriculum). There is no right to withdraw from relationships education or health education. Parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child from sex education by sending a letter or email to the Headteacher. This applies to children until up to three terms before their sixteenth birthday. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should plan for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent. Teachers will plan appropriate, purposeful education for children who are withdrawn from sex education.



### **Pupil consultation**

Pupils will be consulted where appropriate on their own personal, social and citizenship development. This could be in lessons as well as through school council activities.

### **Teaching sensitive and controversial issues**

Teachers will establish a safe, open, and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults, and children alike. 'Ground rules' are agreed and owned at the beginning of the year and reinforced regularly. Teachers will take steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

### **Dealing with difficult questions**

Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. The use of an anonymous question box is another way in which pupils would be supported to ask difficult or sensitive questions without fear of embarrassment. Teachers will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible, but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, provision would be made to meet the individual pupils needs. This may involve the teacher seeking advice from other professional services before continuing discussions with the pupil or arranging support from specialist agencies (such as CAHMS or MHST) to work directly with pupils.

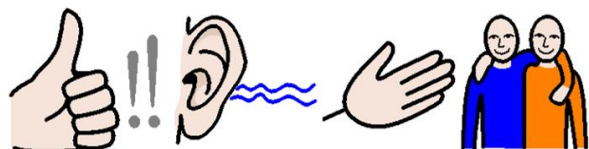
### **Child Protection / Confidentiality**

All those delivering RSHE need to be aware that effective sex and relationship education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Should this situation arise, the staff member will inform the designated safeguarding lead in line with the school procedures for child protection and safeguarding. Staff will make it clear to a child at this point that confidentiality cannot be assured if concerns exist. All members of staff at Ash Lea School have attended safeguarding training.

### **Masturbation**

At Ash Lea we understand that masturbation is an ordinary part of life and a young person's development. For some of our young people understanding the social rules around this is a struggle. Within class settings, and sessions in the community, we strive to discourage masturbation through a combination of distraction and social stories - working hard to never shame a young person but to reinforce the understanding that this is a private behaviour that should happen in a private space.

We have consulted with other professional institutions and considered law when writing this policy. The Sexual Offence Act (2003) states it is illegal to engage in a sexual activity in a public lavatory. This underpins our reasons to support pupils to masturbate in an appropriate, and private space.

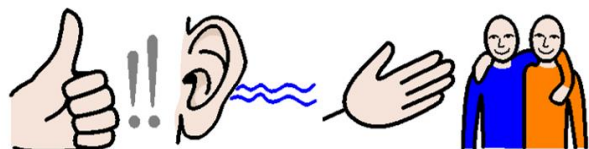


At Ash Lea we will ensure there is private space in class for pupils to access when in a state of arousal, which gives them the opportunity to regulate themselves enough to join back with the class group. The space will be out of view of other pupils and will not be a toilet or bathroom. When in the community pupils will be distracted and encouraged to continue with their activity or return to school.

When at home with parents and carers, we would ask them to encourage young people to be private and appropriate - encouraging them to have private time in their own room, offered before and after school if needed.

We also understand that sensory processing difficulties can impact on a young person's need to masturbate. In these situations, we would again follow the above guidance but would consider the sensory profile of the young person and attempt to meet outstanding sensory needs in a more socially appropriate way.

This is covered in the RHSE scheme of work, 'Keeping Safe' (Week 1).



Last Reviewed: May 2023

Next review: May 2025

Signed: *Kate Davies*

Headteacher

Date: 01/05/23

