Learning Community Trust

Relationships, Sex and Health education (RSHE) policy

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This policy sets out our approach to relationships and sex education (RSE) across the Learning Community Trust.

Section(s) 6,8,4 and 11 and appendices have been adapted to reflect the circumstance in Severndale Academy.

Purpose and Scope

Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) across the Learning Community Trust is rooted in our shared values and vision for developing compassionate, resilient, and inspirational young people. The RSHE curriculum aligns with the Trust's commitment to Respect for All, promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity through open, sensitive discussion and the development of empathy and self-respect. As A Trust With Heart we place our young people's wellbeing at the centre, helping them understand their development in a caring, supportive environment.

In preparing young people for puberty and relationships, RSE encourages Coping With The Challenges of Life, fostering resilience and confidence to navigate an ever-changing world. Our approach supports young people to create positive attitudes towards their identity and relationships.

We work to ensure No Child is Left Behind, providing every young person with the understanding they need to achieve safe and healthy relationships, regardless of background or starting point.

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSHE) in our Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare young people for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help young people develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach young people the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

2. Statutory requirements and links to other policies

In our primary academies, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This legislation also requires us to provide RSHE to all students at our secondary academies.

We offer all pupils a curriculum that is aligned to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science. This includes the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum at primary level.

In teaching RSHE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At Learning Community Trust we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy
- Online Safety or ICT Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, young people and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or a working group of staff from each academy/central trust education team pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – staff across all academies were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy at their respective academies
4. Young people consultation – we investigated exactly what young people want from their RSHE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the board of trustees for ratification

4. Definition

RSHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of young people, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is set out as per the Appendix but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents/carers, young people and staff, taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our young people. If young people ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that all young people are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will share any curriculum resources and materials with parents and carers upon request.

Primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

6. Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is delivered to all students from Year 1 to Year 11 as a discrete subject, taught for one lesson per week. Each half term focuses on a specific theme, such as *Respecting Self and Others*, with teachers planning a sequence of progressive lessons to develop students' understanding over time. Teachers may draw upon the expertise of specialist staff, such as the My Care and Independence Lead, for support in planning and resource development.

Certain topics, for example *Online Safety*, may be revisited on an annual basis to reflect the ongoing vulnerability and safeguarding needs of our students. This ensures that pupils' knowledge in these key areas is continually reinforced and developed in a progressive manner. Other topics, such as *Marriage and Forced Marriage*, may be revisited less frequently depending on their relevance to the needs and contexts of our learners.

Given the complex and diverse nature of our students, it is essential that the RSHE curriculum is flexible and responsive. The curriculum offer reflects the broad range of learning and developmental needs across the academy. Students are grouped according to similar provision and learning needs to ensure that teaching is accessible and meaningful. Class teachers will adapt lesson content and delivery methods to align with the individual needs and abilities of their pupils. Consequently, the delivery of RSHE may vary between classes and even between individual students within a class.

We recognise the importance and sensitivity of teaching topics related to physical development and growing up. At Severndale, RSHE will always be delivered in a manner that is both age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate. Students will have access to learning that helps them understand the physical and emotional changes they experience, the principles of safe and respectful relationships, and the world around them. Teaching will build on prior learning, be adapted to each learner's stage of development, and will never be taught in isolation. All content will be presented in a way that is relevant, meaningful, and appropriate to the individual needs of our students.

At Severndale relationships education will start by focusing on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

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

As pupils develop in their understanding of these topics, the RSHE lessons will focus on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health (where appropriate).

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of young people based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster

parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Across our Trust, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

Severndale is committed to providing a Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum that meets the diverse needs of its students. Each young person's learning will have an individual context, and the depth or focus of RSHE content will vary accordingly. For some students, this may involve more detailed and sustained work on topics such as *appropriate* and *safe touch*, while for others the emphasis may be on understanding *safe and healthy relationships*. All learning is delivered in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and appropriate to each learner's developmental stage.

6.2 Inclusivity

Our academies will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of young people will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all young people's experiences
- During lessons, makes young people feel safe and supported
- Able to engage with the key messages

They will also:

- Make sure that young people learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
- A whole class setting
  - Small groups or targeted sessions
  - 1-to-1 discussions
  - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

6.2 Use of resources

Our academies will consider whether any resources they plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance
- Would support young people in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our young people
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to young people's experiences and won't provoke distress

7. Use of external organisations and materials

Across our Trust, we will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

We remain responsible for what is said to young people. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy,

the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our academies **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSHE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with young people's developmental stage
- Comply with:
- This policy
- The Teachers' Standards
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where they have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
    - What they're going to say
    - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to the academy, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Share any external materials with parents and carers

Our academies **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The board of trustees

The Trust board has delegated the approval of this policy to resources committee who approve the RSHE policy and hold the principal to account for its implementation through the local governing body.

8.2 Local governing bodies

Local governing bodies are responsible for supporting the implementation of the policy at their school and reporting issues to the Education Director if they occur.

8.3 The Principal

The principal is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across their school, for making sure that resources and materials are shared with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE (see section 9).

8.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual young people
- Responding appropriately to young people whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the principal.

All staff that teach students from Year 1 upwards at Severndale will have the duty and responsibility to teach RSHE to their students as per the curriculum and Long Term Overviews.

Further guidance and clarification can be obtained by teachers in discussion with those colleagues who hold whole school responsibilities for RSHE:

- Subject Lead - My Care and Independence Lead: Natalie Barber-Simmons
- Vice Principal - Quality of Education Lead: Laurence Riley

8.5 Young People

Young People are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

For primary-aged pupils, parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the principal of the academy.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

For secondary-aged students, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the academy will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the principal of the academy.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the young person's educational record. The principal will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to young people who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE which is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The principal will also invite visitors from outside the academy, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSHE at our academy is monitored by Natalie Barber-Simmons (My Care and Independence Lead) and Laurence Riley (Quality of Education Lead) through: half termly planning moderation, learning walks, lesson observations and book / evidence moderation.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. At Severndale we use SOLAR to monitor the learning and progress of students.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust's Director of Education every 3 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the resources committee

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

Relationships and sex education curriculum map

KEY STAGE	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS
Foundation Stage	**Families and people who care about me** Respecting self and others My community **Caring friendships** Safe Friendships Sharing What is a friend **Respectful relationships** Safe relationships Who am I? Respecting self and others **Online relationships:** Looking at images, media and videos. Exploring with technology Using Technology around me. **Being safe:** Looking after our bodies Growing and changing Medicine and sun safety Feelings and emotions
Key Stage 2	**Families and people who care about me** What is a family? Who am I? My identity – what makes me… me? What am I good at? Making choices **Caring friendships** Sharing and joining in What makes a good friend What are my friends good at? What is a 'bad' friend?

KEY STAGE	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS
	Respectful relationships Respect for me Respect for you Consent **Online relationships:** Safe use of technology What is 'online' How do we use the internet What is an 'unsafe image' What to do with an unsafe image. **Being safe:** Parts of my body (including the appropriate names of genitals). My changing body Life cycles of humans and animals Public and private places e.g. school, shops, bedroom and bathroom.
Key Stage 3	**Families** Knowing me My family The families of others Making choices – My choices and respecting others choices Types of families **Respectful relationships, including friendships** Care and trust Marriage Qualities of good friendships What does a 'relationship' mean to me? Types of relationships Healthy and unhealthy relationships. Emotions in relationships **Online and media** Selfies and unsafe images Sharing pictures with others. Unsafe searches What to do with an unsafe picture / content What is 'Social media' Healthy screen time

KEY STAGE	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS
	Reporting and sharing concerns **Being safe** Puberty and my changing body Life cycles including conception, birth and death Regulating my emotions **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health** Consent – Appropriate Touch Private and public actions Private and public places (link to actions where appropriate). What does a 'relationship' mean to me? Healthy relationships Emotions in relationships Physical touch in relationships
Post-14	**Families** Making choices – My choices and respecting others choices Types of families Responsibilities of parents Divorce and change in families. **Respectful relationships, including friendships** Marriage and Forced Marriages Marriage and relationships ending Qualities of good friendships Values in relationships. Unhealthy relationships Emotions in relationships Regulating and solving disagreements Bullying in relationships. **Online and media** Sharing images appropriately and safely. Consent with images and pictures. Influences of social media Unhealthy use of technology – including examples of unhealthy use of gambling, forums, social media and pornography. **Being safe** My changing body and puberty. My needs and how to meet them. Life cycles including conception, birth and death

KEY STAGE	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS
	Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health Consent – Appropriate touch of others. Private and public actions Private and public places (link to actions where appropriate). What does a 'relationship' mean to me? Physical touch, intimacy and consent in relationships Health and contraception. Age-appropriate interactions.

Appendix 2: By the end of the primary phase (age 5-11) pupils should know. This is designed for use in mainstream schools and is therefore used a reference and guide for delivery. Content will always be adapted by the teacher to match the needs of students.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	• 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	• 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	• 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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	• 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	• 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	• 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 e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 3: By the end of secondary phase (age 11-16) school pupils should know. This is designed for use in mainstream schools and is therefore used a reference and guide for delivery. Content will always be adapted by the teacher to match the needs of students.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• 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, e.g. 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/carers 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	• 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 e.g. 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	• 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)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• 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, e.g. 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 • 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/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

Appendix 4: Parent/carer form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE ACADEMY	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents/carers	