



Harton  
Academy



## Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RHSE) Policy

February 2024

To be reviewed February 2025

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

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## 1 Statement of intent

Harton Academy believes that a strong Relationship Sex and Health Education is important to help our pupils develop into well-rounded members of society, who can make a positive contribution to their community. Our RSE curriculum is strongly tied to our PSHE, PD and pastoral care programme.

Harton Academy recognises our roles and responsibilities in promoting the health and well-being of all students and believes that having effective Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) within the Academy will allow students to have the skills and knowledge to negotiate relationships successfully.

Sexual Health is an important issue that affects all young people. In South Tyneside, the number of teenage pregnancies has fallen but the North East is above the national average. The Academy, alongside the parents, has the responsibility to ensure that students know where to access contraception and also how to use it. Harton Academy also believes that they have a duty of care to ensure that young people know laws regarding sexual health and their rights in a relationship. It is because of this that we have RSE firmly grounded in our PD Curriculum, in accordance with the DFES guidelines. Relationships are explored in different issues such as bullying, peer pressure and risk-taking behaviour.

*“Effective relationship and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It should not be delivered in isolation. It should be firmly rooted within the framework for PSHE and the National Curriculum.” PSHE Association*

## 2 Right to withdrawal

Parents will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the Academy should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary or secondary as we believe the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Directors                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **3 Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE)
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2019) 'School and college security'
- This policy will be followed in conjunction with the following Academy policies and procedures:
  - Complaints Procedures Policy
  - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
  - E-safety Policy
  - Anti-bullying Policy
  - Safeguarding Policy (including child sexual exploitation)
  - Equal Opportunities
  - SMSC

### **4 Key roles and responsibilities**

- 4.1 The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Academy's RSHE Policy.
- 4.2 The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the RSHE Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- 4.3 The Headteacher has overall responsibility for reviewing the RSHE Policy annually.
- 4.4 The Headteacher has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the Academy's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- 4.5 The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the RSHE Policy.
- 4.6 The Subject Leader for Social and Cultural Studies is responsible for liaising with other staff and professional agencies to devise a suitable scheme of work to ensure a comprehensive RSHE education that achieves the aims laid out in this policy.
- 4.7 The Academy will consult with parents to ensure that the RSE and relationships education elements of the PSHE curriculum reflect the needs and sensibilities of the wider Academy community.

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4.8 The Academy will work with parents throughout the year and will ensure that parents are routinely kept informed about their right to withdraw their children from sex education (but not relationships or health education).

4.9 The Academy ensures that pupils are also involved in the creation of this policy through class discussions and the use of the Staff Student Liaison Committee.

## **5 Aims of the RSHE curriculum**

Harton Academy believes that RSHE is an important part of children's preparation for adult life as well as an educational entitlement of all pupils.

RSHE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, and attitudes based on the fundamental British Values.

5.1 Pupils will learn to do the following:

- Understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.
- Understand how to stay safe and behave online.
- Understand the dangers they may face, both in and around the Academy and beyond, and be provided with the means to keep themselves safe.
- Understand the law and consequences of risky behaviours.
- Develop responsibility and independence within the Academy which they will take forward into society in their working lives.
- Respect other people, in particular, learning to respect the different cultural/ethnic/religious/gendered viewpoints of others in our community and the wider world.
- Understand what constitutes 'socially acceptable' behaviour at Academy and in society.
- Be a constructive member of society.
- Understand democracy.
- Develop good relationships with peers and adults.
- Develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth.
- Make positive, informed choices as they make their way through life.
- Understand that they have a right to speak up about issues or events, and to respect other's right to do the same.
- To encourage personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour;
- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;
- Understand the true meaning of consent
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology/language for sex and relationship issues.
- Develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; gender identity, challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity

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- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
  - Understand the reasons for having protected sex.
  - Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves in a variety of situations including from exploitation, abuse and violence and uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
  - Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
  - Know how the law applies to sexual relationships active consent, sexting and e-safety.

## **6 Teaching methods and learning style**

- 6.1 A range of teaching and learning styles are used to teach RSHE.
- 6.2 Teaching is pupil-led with an emphasis on active learning techniques such as discussion and group work.
- 6.3 'Ice-breaker' activities and clear ground rules regarding discussions are put in place to ensure a safe, supportive and positive learning environment. Examples of discussion guidelines include rules such as:
- No crude language.
  - No raised voices/shouting.
  - No talking over people.
  - Show respect for another's views, even when disagreeing with them.
  - Keep comments subject-specific, as opposed to personal.
- 6.4 Pupils learn research and study techniques and can engage in investigations and problem-solving activities.
- 6.5 All pupils are encouraged to take part in charity work and volunteering, as well as organising Academy events such as assemblies and open evenings.
- 6.6 The Academy uses visiting speakers, such as health workers, the police and Bold Voices, to broaden the curriculum and share their real-life experiences. Any such speakers are closely monitored by the class teacher who will use their professional judgement to end a speech if they consider it to contravene any of the aims of this policy or the values of our Academy.
- 6.7 Pupils' questions, unless inappropriate, are answered respectfully by teachers.

## **7 Timetabling and cross-curricular involvement**

- 7.1 The Academy uses direct teaching via timetabled lessons at KS3,4 and 5 as part of the Personal Development curriculum fortnight to deliver a programme of study to cover RSHE curriculum. This is timetabled as PD (Personal development) which includes Citizenship, PSHE and RSE.

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7.2 The Academy ensures cross-curricular learning through discussion between faculties, for example, the PE and science department, form teachers and other relevant areas. The Harton PSHE matrix highlights the cross curricular learning for RSHE across all key stages.

7.3 There is an element of PSHE in pastoral care and the Academy will ensure that PSHE and pastoral care teams work together to ensure that pupils feel comfortable indicating that they may be vulnerable and at risk.

## **8 Equal Opportunities**

Harton Academy intends to instil the belief in all young people that they are of equal worth and importance irrespective of culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, lifestyle, or visible and invisible disabilities. We aim to recognise and respect differences and take the time to meet specific needs that individual students may have.

### *Ethnic and Cultural Groups*

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.

### *Students with Special Needs*

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

### *Gender, Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation*

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of gender, Gender Identity, sexual orientation and identity, and answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them. We are currently working towards the Rainbow Flag award and integrating this into our Academy.

## **9 Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality**

9.1 All staff are aware of what constitutes child on child abuse. This is likely to include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Physical abuse, e.g. hitting, kicking, hair pulling.
- Sexual violence, e.g. rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, e.g. sexual comments, online sexual harassment, jokes. These may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.

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- Up skirting (taking a picture under a person's clothes without their awareness, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause humiliation, distress or harm).
  - Sexting
  - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

9.2 All staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include:

- Increased pupil absence from Academy, changes in friendships/relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- New possessions or unexplained gifts could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

9.3 All staff are aware of the associated risks surrounding pupils' involvement in serious crime, and understand measures in place to manage these.

9.4 If staff have concerns regarding a child who may be at risk of or suffering from 'honour-based' violence (HBV) including forced marriage, they will speak to the Safeguarding Lead. Where appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures. As highlighted with section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, in cases where FGM appears to have been carried out, teachers must personally report this to the police.

9.5 Staff are aware of KCSIE advice concerning what to do if a pupil informs them that they are being abused or neglected or are witnessing abuse. Staff are also aware of the appropriate levels of confidentiality. This means only involving those deemed necessary, such as the Safeguarding Lead and children's social care. Staff must never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this ultimately may not be in the best interests of the child.

9.6 The Academy will involve the Safeguarding Lead in anything related to safeguarding. They can potentially provide knowledge of trusted, high quality local resources, links to the police and other agencies, and the knowledge of local issues that may be appropriate to address in lessons.

9.7 Every lesson reinforces that, if pupils have any sensitive/personal issues or wish to talk about any of the issues raised in the lesson; they are aware of how to raise concerns or make reports to their RSE/PD teacher or another member of staff about this, and how this will be handled. This also includes processes when they have concerns about a friend or peer.

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- 9.8 Harton invites external agencies to support the teaching of safeguarding-related subjects – they must agree in advance of the session how the external visitor will deal with safeguarding reports.
- 9.9 The Academy is aware that, when teaching new subjects, topics including self-harm and suicide may be raised by pupils. Teachers recognise the risks of encouraging or making suicide seem a more viable options for pupils, and avoid material being instructive rather than preventative. To prevent this, teachers avoid giving instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and the use of emotive language, videos or images.

## **10 Tailoring Relationships and Sex Education and PSHE**

- 10.1 The Academy uses discussions and other activities during initial RSE/PD lessons to ascertain 'where pupils are' in terms of their knowledge and understanding of various subjects. The teaching programme will then be adjusted to reflect the composition of the class with regards to this.
- 10.2 Teaching considers the ability, age, readiness and cultural backgrounds of all young people in the class and will be tailored accordingly.
- 10.3 Adaptations are made for those for whom English is a second language to ensure that all pupils can fully access the curriculum and provision.
- 10.4 All pupils with SEND receive RSE/PD education, with content and delivery tailored to meet their individual needs. Delivery is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.
- 10.5 The Academy will deliver RSE and health education as part of its timetabled Personal Development programme.

## **11 Programmes of study at KS3, 4 and 5.**

The RSHE programme of study will cover the following topics as stated in the DfE statutory guidance. The programme aims to play a crucial role in preventative education, whilst preparing pupils and students for life in modern Britain and aims to create a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

### **Pupils will be taught the following:**

#### **11.1 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

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- What marriage is, including their legal status, e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabitating 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 entered freely
  - The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
  - The roles and responsibilities of parents regarding raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting
  - How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy; judge when a family, friends, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, such as reporting concerns about others, if needed.

### **11.2 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 also includes different (non-sexual) types of relationships
- Practical steps that can be taken in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- How stereotypes, particularly ones based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. normalising non-consensual behaviour or encouraging prejudice)
- That in Academy and in wider society, they can be expected to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect in response (including people in positions of authority) and be tolerant of other people's beliefs
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impacts of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
- That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, such as violent behaviour and coercive control
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are unacceptable
- The legal rights and responsibilities relating to equality (particular with reference to the Equality Act 2010 and its protected characteristics) and that everyone is unique and equal.

### **11.3 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

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- Not to provide others with material that they would not want shared further and not to share material that others send 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, which can negatively alter how people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect behaviour 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.

#### **11.4 Being safe**

- The concepts 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)
- That there are many dangers both inside and outside of Academy and beyond and that they must be equipped with the means to keep themselves safe.

#### **11.5 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 either positively or negatively affected by choices made concerning sex and relationships, 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, and menopause
- That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, such as understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.

#### **11.6 The Law**

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

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Pupils are made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example, but not limited to:

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

### **11.7 Economic wellbeing and being a responsible citizen**

- To recognise, clarify and when necessary, challenge their own core values and how their values influence their choices
- About the law and consequences of certain behaviour, including violent crime and terrorist activity, on themselves and others, and strategies they can use to keep themselves safe outside of Academy.
- The knowledge and skills needed for setting realistic and challenging personal targets and goals (including the transition between key stages)
- The similarities, differences and diversity among people of different a race, culture, ability, disability, sex, gender identity, age and sexual orientation and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice, bullying, discrimination on individuals and communities
- About the potential tensions between human rights, British law and cultural and religious expectations and practices
- About the primacy of human rights; and how to access support for themselves or their peers safely if they have concerns about those rights being undermined or ignored
- About discrimination, how to respond when being discriminated against and responsibilities towards those who are experiencing discrimination
- To recognise that everyone has the same rights to opportunities in learning and work; to recognise and challenge stereotypes; and/or family or cultural expectations that may limit their aspirations
- About their own identity as a learner, differing styles of learning and to develop personal study, research and presentation and organisational skills
- To identify own strengths, interests, skills and qualities as part of the personal review and planning process, including their value to future employability

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- Different types of work, including employment, self-employment and voluntary work; that everyone has a 'career'; their pathway through education and work
  - About the laws and by-laws relating to young people's permitted hours and types of employment and how to minimise health and safety risks
  - About different work roles and career pathways, including developing their own early aspirations
  - About the labour market (including the diversity of local and national employment opportunities), learning options, skills, occupations and progression routes and about self-employment
  - Which choices are available to them at the end of key stage 3/4, sources of information, advice and support, and the skills to manage this decision-making process
  - The benefits of being ambitious and enterprising in all aspects of life
  - About the skills and qualities required to engage in enterprise, including seeing opportunity, managing risk, marketing, productivity, understanding the concept of quality, cash flow and profit
  - About attitudes and values in relation to work and enterprise (including terms such as 'customer service' and 'protecting corporate or brand image')
  - About different types of business, how they are organized and financed
  - To assess and manage risk in relation to financial decisions that young people might make
  - About gambling (including online) and its consequences, why people might choose to gamble and how the gambling industry encourages this
  - To explore social and moral dilemmas about the use of money, including how the choices pupils make as consumers affect other people's economies and environments
  - To evaluate their own personal strengths and areas for development and to use this to inform goal setting
  - About the unacceptability of all forms of discrimination, and the need to challenge it in the wider community including the workplace
  - To think critically about extremism and intolerance in whatever forms they take (including the concept of 'shame' and 'honour based' violence)
  - To recognise the shared responsibility to protect the community from violent extremism and how to respond to anything that causes anxiety or concern
  - About harassment and how to manage this (including in the workplace)
  - How their strengths, interests, skills and qualities are changing and how these relate to future employability
  - About the information, advice and guidance available to them and how to access it
  - To further develop study and employability skills (including time management, self-organisation and presentation, project planning, team-working, networking and managing online presence)
  - About the range of opportunities available to them for career progression, including in education, training and employment
  - About changing patterns of employment (local, national, European and global)
  - To take full advantage of any opportunities for work experience that are available

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- About rights and responsibilities at work (including their roles as workers, and the roles and responsibilities of employers and unions)
  - About confidentiality in the workplace, when it should be kept and when it might need to be broken
  - To develop their career identity, including how to maximise their chances when applying for education or employment opportunities
  - To recognise and manage the influences on their financial decisions, (including managing risk, planning for expenditure, understanding debt and gambling in all its forms)
  - To be a critical consumer of goods and services (including financial services) and recognise the wider impact of their purchasing choices
  - Their consumer rights and how to seek redress

## **12 Assessment**

- 12.1 The Academy sets the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSE and PD as for other areas of the curriculum. A strong curriculum will build on knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including from other subjects, with regular feedback on their progress.
- 12.2 Lessons are planned to ensure pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. Teaching is assessed, identifying where pupils need extra support or intervention.
- 12.3 Pupils' knowledge and understanding is assessed through formative assessment methods such as tests, written assignments, discussion groups and quizzes, in order to monitor progress as with the other areas covered by the Social and Cultural Studies Department.

## **13 Monitoring and review**

- 13.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher on an annual basis.
- 13.2 Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff and other interested parties.
- 13.3 The next scheduled review date for this policy is February 2025.