



Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

2023 - 2024

Introduction

At Denton Community College we believe that RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) makes an essential contribution to every student's health and wellbeing and enables them to prepare for adult life. It is an integral part of the Life programme of study, which is taught discretely within the curriculum through:

- Form and pastoral time
- Whole school drop down days
- Specific units of study within the Life curriculum
- Specific units of study within the science curriculum

Students at Denton Community College come from diverse backgrounds and express a spectrum of beliefs and values. The RSE curriculum is designed to provide comprehensive understanding of the beliefs and attitudes held in our range of families about such issues such as sex and relationship education, abortion, contraception, homosexuality, gender identity and sex outside marriage.

The stage of development and the experiences of any group of young people of the same age will be diverse and varied. This fact has clear implications for our curriculum content, teaching approaches, and the creation of an appropriate learning environment based on the need to develop in young people respect for each other's differences. Denton Community College acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the college, will seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward.

Aim of this policy

The aim of this policy is to communicate to staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors and students the way in which RSE will be delivered and supported at Denton Community College, in accordance with the Secretary of State's [updated guidance on RSE](#).

The aims of RSE at our school are to:

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

Requirements for schools regarding RSE and Health Education and the law

From September 2020, the teaching of RSE was made compulsory. In support of this decision the Secretary of State for Education stated the following:

'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.'

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The key decisions on these subjects have been informed by a thorough engagement process, including a public call for evidence that received over 23,000 responses from parents, young people, schools and experts and a public consultation where over 40,000 people contacted the Department for Education.'

We are required to provide RSE to all students as per the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

What is effective Relationships and Sex Education?

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

RSE at Denton Community College is delivered via a curriculum that facilitates the development of healthy attitudes amongst our learner community towards; sex, sexuality, gender identity, emotions, relationships, and sexual health. It promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students. As well as, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later adult life. In our view, effective relationships and sex education:

- Reinforces positive attitudes and values. Students are helped to examine their own and other people's attitudes and values, particularly related to sexual matters, and to respect the rights of others to their own opinions
- Helps students to develop a good self-image and high self-esteem, responsibility and the ability to make informed decisions
- Aims to remove the barriers created by heteronormativity and CIS normativity presenting sex and gender identity as a spectrum instead of a binary experience
- Provides a curriculum that helps to develop personal and social skills. RSE at Denton Community College encourages the acquisition of skills ensuring that student relationships with others are positive, fulfilling and respectful. Our curriculum helps students to explore how to be themselves in terms of beliefs, culture and traditions and to respect others. It provides opportunities to develop communication skills and healthy assertiveness within a range of different situations. Our curriculum emboldens students to recognise opportunities to develop a healthy lifestyle
- Provides comprehensive acquisition of knowledge and understanding. RSE provides education on: safer internet use, puberty, personal safety, friendship and love, family life and relationships, sexuality and same-sex relationships, different conceptions of gender identity, conception and birth processes, breast feeding, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, prejudice and stereotyping, healthy and unhealthy relationships and sex and the law. Students gain a full understanding of the nature and diversity of relationships and sexuality

Our curriculum provides an objective and balanced view of sexual matters, correcting any misinformation students may have gained. It gives them the information and understanding they need to approach related issues with maturity, sensitivity and objectivity and teaches the equality of differing relationships within society.

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

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

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

What is the moral and values framework Relationships and Sex Education at Denton Community College?

RSE at Denton Community College draws on the expectations outlined in the National Curriculum, which states curricula should:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society
- Prepare students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life
- Provide a clear understanding of the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make

To ensure this:

- We value ourselves as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical growth and development
- We value others for themselves, not only for what they have or what they can do for us
- We value relationships as fundamental to the development and fulfilment of ourselves and others, and to the good of the community

- We value truth, freedom, justice, human rights, the rule of law and collective effort for the common good. In particular, we value families as a source of love and support for all their members, and as the basis of a society in which people care for others
- We expect that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of RSE. Teachers will address students' questions with due regard to the beliefs and values of the child's family
- The teaching of RSE respects and refers to the beliefs of the child's home background. RSE is also part of the college's provision for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. It encourages each student to develop confidence and a clear awareness of their own beliefs and values and to develop mutual understanding and respect between students for their diverse beliefs and values

How does Relationships and Sex Education relate to equal opportunities?

The college's policy for equal opportunities also underpins the teaching of RSE and complies with the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that relationship and sex education can act as a basis for promoting equality between individuals and groups. It necessarily involves an exploration of human and social diversity, and a fostering of self-esteem and self-worth in a learning environment that recognises and respects difference.

We work hard to ensure that our relationship and sex education is relevant and accessible to all of our students and that it is appropriate for all levels of understanding and maturity. It caters for all students and is respectful of how students identify themselves, their sexual orientation and gender identity (established or emerging). This means that relationships and sex education is sensitive to the different needs of individual students and may/will evolve and adapt over time.

How is Relationships and Sex Education taught?

Our college recognises the need to begin with students' own experiences, beliefs and values and we place a high importance on creating a supportive and secure atmosphere where students can develop the confidence needed to talk, listen and think about relationships and sex. In order to do this, teachers:

- Establish ground rules with students
- Emphasise the importance of mutual respect
- Ensure no open personal disclosures in a class setting
- Use distancing techniques
- Provide for anonymity by using a question box (this also gives the teacher time to consult with colleagues on how to answer unexpected questions from students)
- Encourage reflection

The college also draws on a range of teaching methods in order to encourage exploration of attitudes, values and beliefs, using active learning methods which involve students and help them to personalise information. This also increases the likelihood of the learning being relevant and effective. Students are taught how to practise and develop confidence in using communication, negotiation and decision-making skills. Students are consulted about issues they wish to explore, how they wish to work together, how well lessons are going and what changes need to be made.

The college recognises that RSE is a whole college concern. For this reason, some aspects of the curriculum are taught through the PSHE form time programme and the whole school drop down days. However, there are some elements which need to be taught separately within Life lessons where considerable expertise exists. RSE topics in Life are delivered by a group of teachers who are trained and confident in teaching this curriculum.

In addition, the college draws on the expertise of the School Nurse, faith communities and specialist external agencies to support the RSE curriculum.

The college believes that RSE education is beneficial for all students and their wellbeing. Students are consulted about the topics that they wish to learn about and these are integrated where appropriate. Resources and agencies are used that recognise diverse beliefs, create resources that are appropriate to students' age, maturity and religious and cultural background.

All teachers are given training on handling controversial topics and are made clear about confidentiality boundaries and know where/who to refer students for confidential advice and support.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board:

- Will approve the RSE policy and the Headteacher will ensure its implementation.

The Headteacher:

- Will ensure the RSE policy is implemented
- Will ensure that RSE is taught consistently across the school
- Will manage requests to withdraw students from components of RSE

Teachers:

- Will deliver RSE in a sensitive way
- Will model positive attitudes to RSE
- Will monitor progress
- Will respond to the needs of individual students
- Will respond appropriately to students whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from components of RSE

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

Students:

- Are expected to engage fully in RSE and when discussing issues related to RSE
- Are expected to treat others with respect and sensitivity

Right of Withdrawal

Relationships and Sex Education is delivered to all students and it is hoped that all will participate.

As per the 2020 statutory guidance on Relationships and Sex Education parents and guardians have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education, but not relationships education, delivered as part of statutory RSE (other than that which is included in the National Science Curriculum).

Parents/carers need to be aware that discussions concerning sex education can occur at any time if it arises naturally from class discussion within lessons on relationships education.

Parents/carers also need to consider whether they want their child withdrawn from all sex education or just that part which deals explicitly with sexual intercourse and related issues.

Parents/carers wishing to exercise their right to withdraw are asked to make an appointment to meet the Head of PSHE and Life, and Science, along with a member of the senior leadership team to discuss their concerns.

The right to withdraw from sex education applies 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. This process is the same for students with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Headteacher may want to take a student's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

Procedure for Monitoring and Evaluating

The RSE curriculum will be reviewed annually and the college reserves the right to adapt its curriculum at any time if a need arises for it to do so i.e. in response to a current issue. This Policy will be reviewed annually during the Autumn Term.

Evaluation of this policy will include consideration of:

- Assessments of knowledge and understanding of information and issues addressed in RSE
- Student responses to teaching content and methods

- Teacher responses to teaching content and methods
- Evidence of increased self-responsibility and respectful attitudes amongst our student body
- Analysis of data i.e. re: recorded instances of expressions of homophobia, bullying, sexist graffiti, casual use of derogatory language, particularly with sexual or gender meanings.

Appendix 1: What Students Will Learn

Topic	Students Will Learn
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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 recognize this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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



Withdrawal From Sex Education Within RSE (Parent/Carer Form)



To be completed by the parent/carers:

Name of Child	
Life Class	
Name of Parent	
Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education:	
Any other information you would like the school to consider:	
Parent/Carer Signature	
Date	

To be completed by the school:

Agreed actions to be taken by the school following consultation:	
School Representative Signature	
Date	