



GOVERNANCE

Building Inclusive Communities

Relationship and Sex Education Policy 2024-25

To be read in conjunction with the SAND schools' individual RSE policies

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at SAND Academies Trust are to:

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

Each SAND school has an individual RSE Policy tailored to meet the specific needs of its cohort.

2. Statutory requirements

The family of SAND Academy Trust schools is made up of special schools (4 – 16 years), and primaries (4 – 11 years):

As a Trust, we are responsible for ensuring our schools provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

We are not required to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science. This would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, 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

3. Policy development

This Policy has been developed as a framework to support the individual policies written by each school. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school Headteachers were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Board ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with Trustees and ratified.

4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, 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.

5. RSE Curriculum

Each School's individual RSE Curriculum is set out on their website, and within their RSE Policy. This is adapted as and when necessary.

The Curriculum is developed in consultation with parents/carers, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

All curriculum materials are shared with parents and carers upon request.

6. Delivery of RSE

Each School takes an individual approach to how RSE is taught. This may be within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE may be taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects may be included in religious education (RE).

Our Special Schools take into particular consideration the care and sensitivity required in delivering this curriculum to young people with special educational needs.

In all schools, these areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and 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).

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.

6.1 Inclusivity

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

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

Our Schools also:

- Ensure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that is 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 Schools consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- 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 pupils' experiences and will not provoke distress

7. Use of external organisations and materials

The Trust and our Schools will ensure that any agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used do not 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.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced and fit, and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' 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 we 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 are 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 our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, 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 all external materials with parents and carers

We **will not**, 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 Trust Board & Executive

The Trust Board has delegated the preparation of this Policy to the Quality of Education Committee. The Board will approve the Policy. Schools' RSE Policies are overseen by the Director of Education and the Quality of Education Committee.

8.2 The Headteacher

The Trust Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across their school, for sharing resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE (see section 9).

8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress

- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils 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.

Staff who have specific responsibility for teaching RSE in SAND Schools are listed on the individual school websites where appropriate/relevant.

8.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

9.1 SAND Primary Schools

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education.

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

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy (and the relevant form within the Schools' policies) and addressed to the Headteacher.

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

9.1 SAND Special Schools (KS3)

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE 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 school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy (and the relevant form within the Schools' policies) and addressed to the Headteacher.

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

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

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in the Trust's Continuing Professional Development calendar.

The Headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by a named member of staff, and a named Local Advisory Board member in line with to arrangements agreed by the Headteacher.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the Quality of Education Committee annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Appendix 1: Parent/Carer form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carers		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 SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents/carers	<p>Include notes from discussions with parents/carers and agreed actions taken.</p> <p>Eg: [Name] will be taking part in all relationships lessons. During the sex education lessons, he will be working independently on a project in the Year 5 classroom</p>