



# Fountaindale School

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Signed

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Chair of Governors

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Interim Executive Head Teacher

**Date of Adoption:** May 2020

**Due Review Date:** Summer Term 2021

# Fountaindale School

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

**This Policy is in two parts. Part 1 is the general RSE Policy and Part 2 is a Short guide for Parents and Carers with Frequently Asked Questions**

### Part 1

**Rationale:** Fountaindale recognises the entitlement of all pupils to receive Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which is current, meaningful and relevant.

Fountaindale promotes respect for diversity, promoting our pupils as global citizens. We encourage a sense of compassion and understanding of others, and a deep respect for human worth and dignity. We recognise and respect every member of the school community's ethnicity, cultural and religious values and sexual orientation. The advance of modern technology brings with it issues of safeguarding and the school will need to address on-line safety with its pupils in its various forms. This policy forms part of this commitment.

We are aware that parents need to know what their children will be taught at different ages. Our sex and relationships programme form part of the wider PSHE education provision. At Key stage 3 and 4 aspects of sex and relationships education are a statutory entitlement.

**Responsibility for Policy:** School, Governing Body, Head Teacher and Subject Leader for PHSE. The Policy follows the guidance of the Secretary of State's 2019 guidance on RSE. From September 2020 Relationship Education will become a compulsory part of the Curriculum for primary age pupils and Relationship and Sex Education will become a compulsory part of the Curriculum for Secondary Age pupils. Best advice is that pupils of primary age should have access to sex education as appropriate. The Governing body are mindful of their wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 for ensuring that the school strives to do the best for all the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity religion or sexual identity. As a leading player in the RSE and pupils with Special Educational Needs, they are also mindful of the

PHSE Supplementary Advice (2014) Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century in which one of the main recommended resources for RSE and SEN *Living Your Life* was written by Oak Field School, Nottingham.

### **Monitoring and Assessment**

The teaching of RSE is monitored by the Acting Head of School, a member of the Governing body and subject leaders for PSHE and RSE. A curriculum specialist teacher is responsible for leading the overarching subject area of PSHE and RSE. These members of staff monitor lessons and feed back to staff and the PHSE lead. They also monitor the use of resources. Class Appraisal Leads and Curriculum Pathway Leads also work with colleagues to ensure that RSE is monitored and assessed. Our comprehensive curriculum and tools such as PSHE Association website and toolkit provide staff with a wide range of resources and activities.

### **Pupils**

Consultation with pupils informs us not only what they want to know as well as knowing what they think of what is being currently taught. Pupils are involved in the development of resources.

### **Parents and Families**

Parents and carers are kept informed about the policy through the school's newsletters and school website. A copy of the policy is available on the website. Frequently asked questions from parents and carers accompany this policy.

## **CONTEXT**

Fountaindale School is a Nottinghamshire Local Authority Special School for pupils ages 3 to 18 whose special educational needs fall predominantly within the category of complex physical needs and disabilities. All of our pupils have associated learning difficulties, some may have a sensory impairment and/ or communication difficulties.

Fountaindale School recognises that a clear Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy will support the school in meeting outcomes of staying healthy and staying safe. This policy incorporates latest guidelines and ensures a clear framework for a relevant RSE curriculum for all of our pupils and students taking into account issues such as sexuality, disability, ethnicity and faith. Our whole school philosophy is that we believe our pupils have an entitlement to a person centred, personalised and appropriate RSE curriculum.

Relationships and Sex Education forms an integral part of the school curriculum, and whilst sex education is seen as part of the wider programme of health education for pupils, it is important that these sensitive issues are addressed if

pupils are to gain skills to deal with life. Dedicated time is given to this area of the curriculum. The sex education and relationship education is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and the school recognises that this education will need to evolve and adapt over time as the pupil population changes.

### **Relationships and Sex Curriculum**

This is a spiral curriculum in which themes and topics are revisited as pupils grow and develop. There are key learning topics within the Curriculum: Self Awareness, Self-Care, Support and Safety, Relationships (managing feelings), Relationships (changing and growing), Healthy Lifestyles and The World I live in. The curriculum is taught as appropriate to each learning pathway.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

From a base-line assessment of knowledge and needs, an appropriate programme of RSE can be devised for individual students. Regular assessment can evaluate progress of students as well as effectiveness of teaching and resources.

### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

a) Relationships and Sex Education within the school is made relevant and accessible to all pupils, being sensitive in the use of sex education resources, ensuring that they reflect cultural diversity.

*The school ensures that the sex education programmes are appropriate and relevant to all young people within the school. This entails discussion about sexuality and personal relationships within a variety of cultural contexts and the presentation of a broad spectrum of belief.*

b) The moral framework within which sex education is taught is inclusive not exclusive.

*The school strives to ensure that the moral framework within which sex education is taught is inclusive of all young people within the school. No sex education programme is value free, even if it takes place in science. Teachers are aware of the hidden values implicit in many sex education materials and approaches and the need to make these values explicit. Value laden messages can be used constructively if they are explicit and stimulating.*

c) Pupils are made aware of the range of moral and cultural frameworks within society.

*It is important that pupils are made aware of the diversity of moral opinion in society concerning sexual behaviour and personal relationships. Such moral frameworks are both secular and religious and include religion, the law and equal opportunities philosophies among others. They are also made aware of the range of cultural frameworks that exist in society for and implementation of a programme of sex education;*

- to a programme of sex education presented in a moral framework which recognises the diversity in society;
- to sex education which is sensitive to values, standards and personal responsibility, regulating sexual behaviour and relationships.

d) The school ensures that there is a gender dimension to all sexuality and relationship education work.

*It is important that gender issues in sexuality and relationship education are not excluded in an attempt to teach sexuality and relationship education within a religious or moral framework. An honest exploration of masculinity and femininity is a vital part of sex education and it is important that we do not assume that there is a religious consensus on issues concerning gender such as the role of women in society. Equal opportunities in the area of gender and ethnicity should not be mutually exclusive.*

e) Pupils are supported, not undermined, in their cultural identities.

*It is important that staff do not make assumptions about the cultural and/or religious traditions of pupils. The first step in this process is for staff to identify the needs of young people. It is necessary to distinguish between young people's needs and the needs of those who speak on their behalf, acknowledging the gap which may exist between religious/community ideals and actual practices.*

*The school also takes steps to communicate with and involve parents and carers and does not assume homogeneity within one community. When consulting with parents, carers and communities, the school takes steps to ensure that these views are representative of all parts of the community. The school also endeavours to communicate clearly to parents the nature of the programme on sex education.*

f) Pupils are encouraged to develop and clarify their values and attitudes towards sex, sexuality and relationships and to respect and empathise with those of others.

*For young people to develop self-esteem and confidence it is vital that their cultural identities are supported and valued. Self-esteem is an important part of the process by which young people develop their own values and attitudes towards sex and sexuality. An approach to sex education which celebrates diversity in this way encourages young people to be aware of the traditions and beliefs of others, promoting mutual understanding and tolerance. As a school we wish to counteract prejudice and to support the development of self-esteem and a sense of responsibility in every student, irrespective of sexual orientation. The topic of sexual orientation and same sex relationships should be treated with sensitivity and understanding, acknowledging that we live in a society which encompasses widely differing moral and religious views on the subject. We wish all pupils to live happy, safe and fulfilled lives whatever their sexual orientation and acknowledge that all students need support and guidance. The topic fits into*

*our Life Long Learning programme, which considers all relationships – friends, family and partners.*

### **Working with young people and their families**

The school is committed to working with parents and carers. The school has a detailed programme to ensure that the education does not occur haphazardly, though for it to be effective cooperation between home and school is essential. The young person receives a consistent approach, one that is sensitive to his or her needs as well as being appropriate to his or her level of understanding. It is important that staff and parents feel confident with the task in hand so that the young person feels secure.

Parents and carers are notified when particular aspects of sex and relationships education are to be taught. Education should not exacerbate confusion. Parents, carers and staff are encouraged to discuss the issues openly to avoid confusion.

On-going training for parents and carers aims to raise awareness that pupils of whatever age are sexual beings, developing physically, sexually and emotionally. A range of books for parents and carers have been created to support families in these sensitive aspects of their child's life. We emphasise appropriate behaviour being taught from an early age.

Due regard is given to cultural and religious differences and parents are encouraged to discuss concerns. Regular meetings are held for parents and carers to discuss concerns and issues and learn more of their child's education in this area.

### **Rights and principles for pupils and students.**

1. The Governing body are of the opinion that in this all age school all pupils are entitled to an appropriate and balanced sex education programme. They seek to ensure that all pupils access the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.'
2. The Governing body endorse the National and local guidance given in relation to sexuality and relationship and endorse the stated rights and principles stated below:

#### **Right to Sexuality**

"It is important to recognise that a knowledge of sex and sexuality is a basic human right and pupils have a right:

- to be a sexual being
- to grow up and achieve adult status
- to form and break relationships

- to acquire knowledge about sexuality and social behaviour such as they are able to assimilate
- to privacy and dignity
- to make informed sexual choices;
- to have opportunities to love and be loved and enjoy as full a range of satisfying human relationships as possible; - to legal protection, (including protection against exploitation Principles which guide how we ensure inclusive education and differentiate learning
- respect for human worth and dignity
- freedom of thought, speech, writing and worship
- equal opportunity for personal development
- continuous learning which allows for progress, however slow the progress;
- autonomy is needed by everyone - each within individual capability;
- a person's ethnic origins, cultural and religious values must be recognised and respected at all times;
- the individual's right to learn and develop at an appropriate pace.

### **Entitlements**

More specifically, having regard for the uniqueness and special circumstances alluded to previously, all pupils have entitlements:

- to receive information about human development, with facts being presented in an objective, balanced manner, appropriate to the age, stage, level of maturity and learning needs of the individual; - to knowledge about sexuality, with a structured framework of learning experiences designed to prevent unnecessary anxiety.

This includes learning to communicate about sexuality and the development of appropriate language and vocabulary;

- to consideration of and specific training for relationships building and socio-sexual behaviour in order to promote greater social confidence; this would include realistic information on responsibilities and expectations of personal relationships;
  - to information, advice and guidelines on inappropriate sexual behaviour (social, legally and culturally unacceptable), and all aspects of exploitation;
- to involvement of teachers, parents, members of the Governing body and carers in the planning.

## **Fountaindale School**

### **Relationships and sex Policy and Programme A short guide for Parents and carers and frequently asked questions**

#### **Why does there need to be a policy and programme for sex education?**

Life and social skills form an integral part of the curriculum and sex education is seen as part of the general health and emotional development for the pupils at Fountaindale School. Whilst accepting that sex education is only part of a much wider programme of life skills, it is important that its content be examined in some detail. It is a very sensitive area of the curriculum, but one which must be managed if young people are to be equipped to deal with life - its joys as well as its hazards. Education should not happen in a haphazard way. Parents of younger pupils may feel that this is not relevant, but all children need to know about their bodies; know their body parts; learn about modesty and dignity; make choices in life and keep healthy and safe.

#### **What role can parent and carers play?**

For such a programme of education to be effective, it is vital that there is cooperation between home and school. The child or young person must receive a consistent approach that is sensitive to his or her needs as well as being appropriate to his or her level of understanding. With the co-operation of parents and carers appropriate programmes of education can be followed. School can help with resources which can be used in the home to support the young person.

#### **Is this for all pupils?**

Parents, carers and staff need to be aware that pupils of whatever age are sexual beings and appropriate behaviour needs to be taught from an early age. Respect needs to be given to their feelings as well as support been given in an understanding of their responsibilities. It can be difficult for both parents, carers and staff to accept the fact that however limited a young persons' intellectual ability may be, he or she is developing physically, sexually and emotionally. As they approach adolescence, changes are happening to his or her body, which are difficult to understand. Emotions occur and may result in inappropriate behaviour, which causes anxiety both for the young person and his or her family.

#### **Can a pupil be withdrawn from sex education classes?**

Under the 2019 Guidance, parents and carers may now withdraw their child from sex education classes. It would need to be pointed out to parents and carers that much of relationship and appropriate education is part of the total curriculum; incidental education in this area is as important as formal sessions. If a parent or carer has a concern about sex education they should direct it to the

Head of School in the first instance. If not satisfied they should then contact the Chair of Governors.

(Section 241 of the Education Act 1993 gave parents and carers the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of the school's programme of sex education, other than those elements which are required by the National Curriculum Science Order. This right was enshrined in section 252 of the Education Act 1996 and the Learning and Skills Act 2000. This parental right currently extends to all pupils attending the school, including those over compulsory school age, and may be exercised by either parent or a person who has responsibility or care of the child. However, the government altered its legislation to alter the right of withdrawal down to the age of 15 from 2011. Parents do not have the right to withdraw Year 11 or sixth form students from Sex & Relationship Education.)

Whilst parents and carers are not required to give reasons for their decision, the school would be grateful if they would voluntarily indicate their reasons for withdrawal so that any possible misunderstanding about the nature of the sex education provided by the school can be resolved. In view of the context for the teaching programme it is, of course, hoped that no parent or carer will feel the need to withdraw their child.

Roles and Responsibilities.

**1. Who has responsibility for the organisation of School's Relationships and Sex Education?**

Working with the Governing body, this is the responsibility of the Head of School and PSHE and RSE subject Leader.

**2. Who will teach it?**

All staff will be responsible for supporting pupils in their general learning and development in their school life. Class teachers will deliver lessons during timetables PSHE and RSE. Learning in the informal setting of school activities such as playtime is as important as more formal teaching sessions so all staff will be involved in supporting pupils as needed at these times. Other professionals will be used as appropriate. Training is provided for staff.

**3. How are classes to be organised?**

Classes are organised within Strands to suitability.

Sexuality and relationship education should be made relevant and accessible to all pupils at school.

**4. Who monitors the resources and effectiveness of the programmes?**

There is a wide range of resources, chosen to suit individual needs, and they are available to be shown to parents and carers. The Head of school and the leader for PSHE and RSE will monitor the effectiveness of the programme through audits and observations of lessons. These leaders as well as class staff will provide regular reviews.

**5. Are there any particular issues staff should be aware of?**

Contraceptive advice - Parents and carers may wish to discuss with the school doctor or a nurse or access an appropriate clinic.

Confidentiality - It is made clear to pupils that whilst there can be a degree of confidentiality, in the case of suspected abuse, such information must be passed on.

Child Protection Procedures - The school is governed by the NSCP procedures.

**6. Does the school have a bullying procedure?**

The school has a policy on bullying as well as peer on peer abuse which is available to all parents and carers.

**7. Does the school work with parents on this area of work?**

There is close liaison with parents and carers. Workshops can be arranged for visiting professionals and led by our Parent Liaison Officer if needed. Parents and carers are kept informed about the policy through the school's website. A copy of the policy is available on request and on the website. Frequently asked questions from parents and carers accompany this policy.

**8. Who can access the policy?**

The policy is available to parents, carers, members of the Governing body and relevant bodies.