



QUANTOCK

EDUCATION TRUST

Relationships and Sex Education and Physical Health and Mental Well-being Policy

LINKS: [Anti-Bullying Policy](#); [Behaviour and Ethos Policy](#); [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#); [Equality and Diversity Policy](#); [Equality Objectives Statement](#); [SEND Trust Statement](#)

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POSTHOLDER RESPONSIBLE: CEO

TRUSTEE COMMITTEE: Ethos and Education

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AUDIENCE: All Trust Staff & parents

This policy will be reviewed annually on or before 1st June 2027

Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Aims and Objectives	4
3	Definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)	5
4	Roles and Responsibilities	6
5	Delivery of RSE	7
6	RSE: Curriculum and Outcomes	8
7	Health education: Physical health and mental well-being.....	8
8	Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.....	9
9	Right to request withdrawal from sex education	9
10	Confidentiality and Child Protection	10
11	Equal opportunities	11
12	Accountability.....	11
13	Complaints.....	12

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Quantock Education Trust (QET) (the “Trust”) believes to prepare for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, children and young people need to have the knowledge, skills and self-confidence to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is about giving children and young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Health Education is giving pupils information to make well-informed, positive choices about their own health and wellbeing. The Trust recognises that physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that pupils can recognise when things are not right in their own health or the health of others, and can seek support when needed.
- 1.2 The Trust respects every pupil’s entitlement to Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education and ensures that it meets its statutory obligations as set out in latest Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance. Relationships Education is compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as Health Education being compulsory in all state-funded schools.
- 1.3 The Trust has a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the best for all its pupils irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion or sexual orientation. As a result, RSE will be taught in a way which is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may need to adapt and change over time to reflect the needs of the particular cohort.
- 1.4 The Trust will ensure pupils understand the importance of equality and respect and that they learn about all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment, by the end of their secondary education. The teaching of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender content will be sensitive and age appropriate and will be fully integrated into programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. The Trust is mindful that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate and will be careful not to endorse any particular view or teach it as fact. However, the Trust will ensure pupils are taught to recognise that all those with a protected characteristic should be treated with dignity and respect.
- 1.5 This overarching statement guides the work and implementation of the statutory guidance all schools in the Trust. Each school is also required to have its own school specific RSHE policy which provides the detail relating to roles, responsibilities, curriculum delivery (including SEND and the parental right to withdraw). Relationship Education is a mandatory requirement for all primary schools; Relationship and Sex Education is a mandatory requirement for all secondary schools and Health Education is required in all schools.

1.6 This Trust-level policy sets the overarching principles and statutory expectations. Each school must implement these through a school-specific RSHE policy detailing curriculum sequencing, delivery models, and local context. You can find the individual schools' policies on their websites here:

- [Haygrove](#)
- [Sexey's](#)
- [Spaxton](#)
- [Stogursey](#)
- [Ashlands](#)
- [Haselbury Plucknett and Merriott](#)
- [St Bartholomews](#)

1.7 The Trust is aware of the need to be mindful of and respectful to a wide variety of faith and cultural beliefs across each school, and will make every attempt to be appropriately sensitive; equally it is essential that children and young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. The Trust believes that its pupils deserve the right to honest, clear, impartial scientific and factual information to help better form their own beliefs and values, free from bias, judgement or subjective personal beliefs of those who teach them.

1.8 It is the responsibility of all individuals in the Trust to familiarise themselves with the principles set out in this policy, be aware of the statutory guidance, and ensure that individual schools comply with statutory requirements.

1.9 Foundation governors and trustees will also have wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the religious ethos of church schools.

1.10 This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, pupils and staff to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community. Examples of how we consult include:

- Information evenings where appropriate
- Access to materials (online/on request)
- Regular communication methods such as newsletters and termly curriculum updates

1.11 The policy will be reviewed annually, and parents will be consulted in advance about significant changes.

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 Through the delivery of high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate RSE, Relationship and Health Education, the Trust aims to help prepare pupils for the onset of puberty, give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene, create a positive culture in relation to sexuality and relationships and to

ensure pupils know how and when to ask for help and where to access support. By the end of their education the Trust pupils will have been taught how to develop resilience and feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy in preparation for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

2.2 Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education are intended to help pupils to:

- 2.2.1 Build healthy, respectful relationships focusing on family and friends.
- 2.2.2 Understand how to be healthy and be aware of potential risk areas (such as drugs and alcohol).
- 2.2.3 Learn about intimate relationships and sex.
- 2.2.4 Learn about mental wellbeing.
- 2.2.5 Develop key personal attributes, such as kindness, integrity, generosity and honesty.

3 Definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

- 3.1 Relationships education at primary phase is about teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults who can support them. It includes how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy, establishing personal space and boundaries. Relationships education doesn't involve explaining the detail of different forms of sexual activity, but can cover sensitive topics such as sexual violence in order to keep children safe.
- 3.2 RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that gives pupils the confidence to make sound decisions when facing risks and other challenges. It includes teaching about friendship, the importance of caring, stable and mutually supportive relationships with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship.
- 3.3 RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches children and young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others, to build self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity so that they can develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.
- 3.4 RSE will outline that there are different types of committed, stable relationships, the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships, the importance of marriage as a relationship choice and why it must be freely entered into, how relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for raising children, as well as highlighting the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, characteristics of successful parenting and how to judge when relationships have become unsafe as well as how to seek help or advice and report concerns about others.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the Trust community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community are set out in detail below.

4.1 Board of Trustees

4.1.1 Trustees will monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy by reviewing pupils' progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes. They and the individual school's Local Governance Committees will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of the policy. Trustees will scrutinise relevant data, review any issues that might arise and act as a point of challenge for decisions taken by the Headteacher.

4.1.2 The Board of Trustees and individual school's Local Governance Committees (LGCs) are responsible to make sure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- RSHE is well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- The quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- Teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- Clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- RSHE is resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

4.2 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

4.2.1 The CEO will ensure that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is taught consistently across the schools within the Trust and will report back to the Board of Trustees on educational outcomes and other relevant data. They will ensure that senior staff receive regular professional development training in how to deliver Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.

4.3 Local Governance Committee (LGC)

4.3.1 Local governors in each school will review and monitor the application and implementation of this policy by receiving regular reports from the headteacher on educational outcomes. Local governors will scrutinise relevant data, review any issues that might arise and act as a point of challenge for decisions taken by the principal. The LGC will annually report its findings to the board of trustees.

4.4 Headteacher

4.4.1 The Headteacher, with support from the Senior Leadership Team, will ensure that staff are supported, receive regular professional development training in how to deliver RSE and are up to date with policy changes. They will ensure that RSE is well led, effectively managed and well planned across various subjects (to avoid unnecessary duplication of

topics) and that the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation. The Headteacher will ensure that teaching is age-appropriate, delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND and that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled appropriately. They will ensure that teaching delivered by any external organisation is age-appropriate and accessible for pupils and will liaise with parents regarding any concerns or opinions regarding RSE and Health Education provision and will manage parental requests for withdrawal of pupils from non-statutory, non-science components of relationships education, RSE and Health Education.

4.5 Staff

- 4.5.1 Teachers of RSE, Relationships and Health Education will ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education and will attend and engage in professional development training. Teachers will encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a pupil approaches a member of staff with an issue that they feel unable to manage alone, the concern should be referred to their line manager.

4.6 Parents

- 4.6.1 The Trust hopes to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents through mutual understanding, cooperation and trust. Parents are expected to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. The Trust hopes parents will create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support from the school where they feel it is needed.

4.7 Pupils

- 4.7.1 Pupils are expected to take RSE, Relationships and Health Education seriously. Pupils are expected to listen, be considerate of other pupils' feelings and beliefs, comply with class-set confidentiality rules and support one another with issues that arise during class. Pupils who fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the Trust's behaviour policy.

5 Delivery of RSE

- 5.1 RSE will be delivered in a non-judgmental, factual way allowing scope for pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Teachers will tailor the delivery of RSE to meet the specific needs of the pupils in that class, and to be responsive to their behaviour and development. Classes will explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable pupils to make informed decisions regarding sex and relationships as well as being able to differentiate between fact, opinion and belief and an understanding of the law on various topics. Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles

will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

- 5.2 Staff will ensure that all resources used in the delivery of relationships education, RSE and health education are appropriate for the age and needs of their pupils. Examples of these resources are available upon request from each school.
- 5.3 The Trust believes that working with external organisations can enhance the delivery of relationships education, RSE and health education, and details of external providers used are available upon request from each school.

5.4 Primary Schools:

- 5.4.1 In our primary schools, relationships education will be delivered through a planned, age-appropriate curriculum including PSHE and other relevant subjects. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Staff will use teaching methods that take account of these differences and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.

5.5 Secondary Schools:

- 5.5.1 In our secondary schools, RSE will be delivered in RSE lessons} and will build on the foundation of relationships education delivered in primary school.

6 RSE: Curriculum and Outcomes

- 6.1 By the end of their education the Trust expects pupils to know the information set out in the statutory guidance.
- 6.2 The Trust recognises that pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond any sex education covered by the school, or which relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. The Trust recognises that children may turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online, when they have unanswered questions. Staff will use different strategies to handle these questions, which may include providing age-appropriate factual information, using professional judgement to respond in line with the school's RSHE curriculum and safeguarding responsibilities, deferring the question to a more appropriate time or setting, signposting pupils to trusted adults or reputable sources of information, and, where appropriate, sharing concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- 6.3 Curriculum materials can be viewed by contacting the school Headteacher in the first instance.

7 Health education: Physical health and mental well-being

- 7.1 The Trust wishes to promote pupils' health and wellbeing by encouraging self-control, their ability to self-regulate and strategies for doing so. This will enable pupils to become

confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks, or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. The Trust believes that an integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing will have a positive impact on behaviour and attainment. Health education will be delivered through a planned, age-appropriate curriculum including PSHE/RSHE and other relevant subjects.

- 7.2 By the end of primary the Trust will cover the content set out within the individual school policies.
- 7.3 By the end of secondary the Trust will cover the content set out within the individual school policies.
- 7.4 Curriculum materials can be viewed by contacting the school's Headteacher in the first instance.

8 Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

- 8.1 The Trust will endeavour to ensure that RSE and Health Education is accessible for all pupils. We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and RSE and Health Education may be particularly important for such pupils, for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Teaching will be sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, differentiated and personalised to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages.
- 8.2 Staff will make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage faced by pupils with disabilities and will be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice and the Trust's SEND Policy when planning for these subjects. Staff will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information.

9 Right to request withdrawal from sex education

- 9.1 The Trust hopes that parents will feel comfortable with, and understand the importance of, the education provided to their children as described in this policy. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education aspects of RSE.
- 9.2 Before withdrawing or making a request, the Trust strongly urges parents to carefully consider their decision as sex education is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development. Parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships or Health Education or the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the science curriculum.
- 9.3 Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from sex education should put their request in writing and send it to the Headteacher who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances,

the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, 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 will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

- 9.4 If a pupil is excused from sex education the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

10 Confidentiality and Child Protection

- 10.1 The Trust hopes to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. All teachers will receive training around confidentiality and should ensure that pupils understand that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. If a child protection issue is disclosed to a member of staff, that member of staff should follow the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. Staff must not investigate disclosures but must report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- 10.2 If a staff member is approached by a pupil under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- ensure that the pupil is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active;
- encourage the pupil to talk to their parent or carer. Pupils may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible;
- decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a member of staff is informed that a pupil under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures.

- 10.3 Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

- 10.4 At the heart of RSHE subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

- 10.5 Any planning for RSHE provision and policy documents should take close account of the requirements set out in Part 1 and Part of QET's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and School Policies.

- 10.6 Children should be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This should include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer.
- 10.7 KCSIE is clear that all staff should know what to do if a pupil tells them that they are being abused or neglected or are witnessing abuse. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and children's social care.
- 10.8 Good practice would be to involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) in anything that is safeguarding-related in the context of RSHE. They will potentially have knowledge of trusted, high quality local resources that could be engaged, links to the police and other agencies and the knowledge of any particular local issues which it may be appropriate to address in lessons.
- 10.9 Where a school invites external agencies in to support delivery of these subjects, they must agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding report should be dealt with by the external visitor.

11 Equal opportunities

- 11.1 RSE and Health Education will be delivered equally to both genders, normally in mixed classes. There are, however, certain topics that may be delivered in single sex groupings e.g. menstruation and personal hygiene.
- 11.2 The Trust has a commitment to ensure that RSE and Health Education is relevant to all pupils and is taught in a way that is age and stage appropriate. Pupils are encouraged to openly and freely discuss diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously in accordance with the Trust's behaviour policy.

12 Accountability

- 12.1 Key aspects of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education are in scope for Ofsted inspection; for example, through inspectors' consideration of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare; and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 12.2 Compliance with statutory requirements will be monitored via the curriculum review process embedded in the school improvement strategy, via line management of RSHE, and via regular external scrutiny such as in Safeguarding Reviews, Curriculum reviews/audits.
- 12.3 Specific monitoring systems could include:

- Pupil voice
- Curriculum audits
- Safeguarding data trends
- Behaviour and incident data
- Ofsted readiness checks

13 Complaints

- 13.1 If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Headteacher in accordance with the Trust's complaints policy.