

# **Primary Academy Relationships and Health Education Policy**

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## 1.0 Policy statement

Dixons Academies Trust is committed to ensuring that all primary students are offered the opportunity to receive a comprehensive, well-planned programme of relationships and health education. Dixons believes that high quality relationships and health education is an essential part of schooling which supports students' development and prepares them for adult life so that they can make responsible and well-informed decisions.

The DfE's guidance, 'Relationships, Sex and Health Education Guidance 2019', defines the primary 'relationships' element of the programme as: "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." The DfE's guidance defines the primary 'health' element of the programme as: "teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing." Teachers will be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

Relationships and health education is taught in RE, science, PE and through our PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) curriculum. There are planned opportunities for relationships and health education; however, teachers will address questions from students, as and when they occur, if they are deemed pertinent to understanding and age-appropriate. Schemes are entirely sensitive and age-appropriate and may be adapted in each academy according to the national and local context. Major world religions and their beliefs about relationships are taught in Religious Education (RE) which is a compulsory part of our curriculum offer.

## 2.0 Scope and purpose

- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical developments of students so that they may make healthy and safe life choices.
- To prepare students for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life so that they may make a positive contribution to society.
- To consider a range of values and moral issues, including the importance of family life.
- To help students understand the biological facts related to human growth and development (puberty).
- To focus on the importance of healthy relationships.
- To demonstrate and encourage personal responsibility and positive and informed choice.
- To encourage high self-esteem and respect for others.

## 3.0 Legislation and department for education guidance

Our policy is underpinned by and compliant with:

- DfE Relationship, Sex and Health Education Guidance 2019
- Children and Social Work Bill 1 March 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- Equality Act 2010

## 4.0 Procedures

- 4.1 All our academies have an on-going programme of PSHCE, including relationships and health education throughout Year R to 6. Sex education is not taught at primary school level. Our programme is regularly updated and reviewed, and is delivered through PSHCE, PE, science and computing lessons. All content is taught in an age-appropriate manner with an emphasis on facts rather than staff opinion or belief.
- 4.2 Class teachers, graduate co-teachers or cover teachers teach PSHCE through weekly or fortnightly timetabled lessons. The curriculum overview for each cycle can be found in the Appendix.
- 4.3 Parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw from relationships and health education. Schools are required to teach the content by law under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

## 5.0 Coverage

Families may expect the following to be covered in an age-appropriate way:

- different types of relationships including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers
- how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others; commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent; how to manage conflict; and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships
- how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health
- healthy relationships and safety online
- healthy bodies and lifestyles including keeping safe, how to give first aid, puberty, drugs and alcohol education
- healthy minds including emotional wellbeing, resilience, mental health and positive self-image

## 6.0 Information through other curriculum subjects

- 6.1 Families must be aware that, through other curriculum subjects such as English, drama, history and RE, additional issues may come up and, therefore, require a certain amount of discussion. As long as any discussion takes place within the context of the subject, and is age appropriate, staff will deal both sensitively and professionally with any issues which arise, informing families where appropriate.
- 6.2 A number of these issues are mentioned below:
- awareness of partnerships, marriage and divorce, and the impact of loss, separation and bereavement
  - discussion of where human babies come from (when teaching baby mammals or life cycles in science)
  - current affairs including topics such as terrorism, crime and other world issues relevant at the point of teaching (CBBC Newsround will be used frequently in our academies)

## 7.0 Working with parents

- 7.1 Our Trust values our close working relationship with parents; our three-way partnership is a corner-stone of our on-going success. By working closely with parents, we have convinced them of the value of high quality PSHCE lessons for their children.
- 7.2 Parents currently have the right to withdraw their children from sex education within PSHCE, but not relationships education and not from those elements which are in the formal science curriculum. Sex education is not currently taught in primary schools at Dixons. The primary science curriculum covers animal reproduction and puberty. Parents cannot withdraw their child/ren from this part of the curriculum. The science curriculum overviews are available on each academy's website.

## 8.0 Students with special educational needs

All academies will ensure that all aspects of PSHCE, including relationships and health education, are tailored to the needs of all students. Staff are mindful that a particular need may leave a student more vulnerable to exploitation and, therefore, preparation for adult life will be particularly important.

## 9.0 Roles and responsibilities

- 9.1 Class teachers, graduate co-teachers or cover teachers will teach PSHCE through weekly or fortnightly timetabled lessons. The curriculum overview for each cycle can be found in the Appendix.
- 9.2 The academy nurse may be used to deliver some elements of the PSHCE curriculum as appropriate.

## 10.0 Use of outside visitors

It is anticipated that professionals from outside our academies will be involved in teaching the PSHCE programme at certain times. Every visitor or professional speaker involved in this programme will be made aware of the PSHCE policy of the academy.

## 11.0 Confidentiality and safeguarding

Teachers understand that, to some extent, confidentiality during PSHCE lessons must be acknowledged so that students feel that they are in a 'safe space' where they can ask questions. Staff understand, however, the need to report immediately (in line with the Child Protection Policy) any concerns, such as children displaying age-inappropriate knowledge or interest in sex, or expressing views that may indicate a lack of respect for the safety and self-esteem of others.

## 12.0 Promoting positive behaviour and equality

As well as formally teaching children about the Equality Act (2010) and the rights of people recognised as having protected characteristics, our academies will constantly promote a positive approach to equality. Sexism, homophobia and any form of discrimination will not be tolerated and students will be challenged to communicate in appropriate language and have regard for the rights of others. All staff will constantly role-model the highest professional standards, having equal, unconditional, positive regard for all individuals regardless of their gender, race, sexuality, religion or disability.

## 13.0 Monitoring and reviewing

PSHCE, including relationships and health education, will be monitored by the Principal continually and adjusted as necessary to reflect the local and national context. The policy will be formally reviewed on an annual basis and any changes will be communicated to the Local Governing Body.