



DUDLEY ACADEMIESTRUST
Relationships and Health Education

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Introduction

At our school, we want to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the correct provision is in place so that pupils have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Aims

The aims of Relationships and Health Education (RHE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for body changes and ensure they understand the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of different relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Please note that in years 4-6 the Community Nurse delivers sessions about body changes, health and hygiene and the correct vocabulary for pupils to use when describing themselves and their bodies.

Through the provision outlined in this policy, we also aim to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence and develop communication and assertiveness skills that will help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. It is our intention to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, different relationships, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them.

We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the necessary tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and in the future.

Definition

The RHE curriculum is part of the whole school Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) curriculum, which is planned and designed to be age appropriate, under the following themes:

- Relationships (families and friends).
- Health and Wellbeing.
- Living in the Wider World.
- My Future Self.
- Online / Digital.

RHE topics fall under all of these themes and are taught within the PSHE curriculum but may also be covered across the curriculum in subjects such as science.

RHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RHE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

Statutory Requirements

As a primary school, we are required to provide RHE to all pupils under [section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). We must also consider guidance issued by the Secretary of State (Education Act 1996, section 403) and adhere to legal duties, including the [Equality Act 2010](#) and safeguarding legislation. This policy will be updated as necessary to ensure compliance with statutory guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health Education effective from 1st September 2026, which covers personal safety (including online risks), emotional well-being, inclusivity, and accurate body terminology.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education, with input from our expert staff and in consultation with all staff and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review: Staff worked together to collect all the relevant information including national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation: All staff had the opportunity to review the policy and make recommendations. The policy was also discussed during training sessions.
- Parent/stakeholder consultation: Parents/carers were invited to complete an electronic document to provide feedback regarding the policy.
- Ratification: Once amendments were finalised, the policy was shared with the Board of Trustees and ratified.

Implementation and Curriculum

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Our RHE curriculum is set out as per [Appendix I](#) but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

It is important that we implement our RHE policy consistently throughout the school and provide effective provision throughout classrooms. We encourage teachers to provide lessons that are specific to the needs of the pupils in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development.

Through this aspect of our curriculum, we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions

regarding relationships. It is important that pupils know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

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, same sex 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. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents/carers and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Use of External Organisations and Materials

We will make sure that an 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 don't 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 it 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're 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/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.

We **won't**, 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.

Guest Speakers

Guest speakers may be invited to the school to discuss topics related to healthy relationships. On some occasions, subject matter may be presented by an expert or health professional with relevant experience. A teacher will be present throughout these sessions. Visitors will receive a copy of this policy and are expected to adhere to its guidelines.

Guest speakers must comply with the Visiting Speakers Policy and, when required, complete the necessary documentation. They will provide the school with advance copies of materials intended for use, which will be made available for parents/carers to review.

Terminology

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts; discussion around what is and what is not acceptable language to use will also be discussed.

Dealing with Difficult Questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from their manager.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this may include:

- An anonymous question box; this will enable pupils to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to RHE.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information. Some of these include:

- Interactive teaching methods.

- Use of expert guest speakers.
- Practical activities.
- Group and paired activities.

For more information about our RHE curriculum, see [Appendix I](#).

Inclusivity

We 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, make pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - I-to-I discussions
 - Digital formats
 - Consider the level of differentiation needed

Equal Opportunities

RHE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal and social preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to different relationships will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the school's behaviour policy.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

We hope to provide a safe and supportive community within our school where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at the school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all staff.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the school's child protection and safeguarding procedure will be followed.

Personal information about pupils who have approached a teacher for discussion should not be shared with any other person. If there is a child protection concern, the information must only be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as is outlined in the school's child protection and safeguarding procedure. Staff members that breach the right to a child's privacy by disclosing or sharing confidential information with no reason to do so will be dealt with under the school's staff disciplinary and grievance procedures.

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 their SEN Coordinator to decide what is in the best interests of the child.

Parents'/Carers' Right to Withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from the statutory components of relationships and health education, such as key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body.

The school aims to keep parents/carers informed about all aspects of the Relationships and Health Education (RHE) curriculum. All RHE materials and resources are available for parents/carers, along with this policy. School will do everything it can to ensure that parents/carers are comfortable with the education provided to their children in the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has delegated the approval of this policy to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RHE.

Staff

At our school, all teaching staff are responsible for teaching RHE to our pupils, which is appropriate to the age and stage.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RHE in a sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RHE.
- Monitoring progress.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the puberty component of RHE.

Pupils

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

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RHE through staff inset days, sharing of good practice and distribution of literature and resources. This is supported using an online portal for continuous professional development.

The school will also invite the school nurse to provide support and training to staff who are delivering the RHE curriculum.

Complaints

Parents/carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the RHE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints policy.

Monitoring Arrangements

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide RHE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we review the RHE curriculum termly and inform parents/carers of any revisions to the school's policy or growing up talk where necessary.

We will review our RHE curriculum and policy bi-annually, gathering feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff. We will update accordingly to align with RSHE guidance effective from September 2026.

Appendix I: By the End of Primary School Pupils Should Know

Relationships	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care for me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded • That not every child will have the friends they would always like, that most people feel lonely sometimes and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it. • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed
Respectful, kind relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs. • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Create opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity • 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 those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration. • The importance of permission-seeking (consent) and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults • How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust
<p>Online relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. The importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure. • That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults • The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up • That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe • That each person’s body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know • How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust. • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources
Health and wellbeing	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
General wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness • The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health. • The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. That worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition. • How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others’ feelings. • How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate. • That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support. • That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently. • Where and how to seek support, including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else’s mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online). • That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help
Wellbeing online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils will be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet. • That online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection. • The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others’ mental and physical wellbeing. • How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online. • Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted. • The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive. • How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them. • That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults. • How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted. • That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent. • Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online
Physical Health and Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. • The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this. • The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity • How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.
Healthy eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What constitutes a healthy diet.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food. • The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. • The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay)
Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.
Health protection and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. • About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn. • About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular check-ups at the dentist. • About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing. • The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.
Personal safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks. • How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.
Basic first aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them. • Concepts of basic first aid to treat common injuries.
Developing bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. • The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts. • The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes.