

**Outcomes  
First  
Group.**

# **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY**

**Maple Grove School**

**Updated 23 September 2024**



**MAPLE  
GROVE**

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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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### Implementation:

Maple Grove School's relationship and Sex Education Policy should be read in conjunction with

- Curriculum Policy
- Vision and Aims of the school.
- Safeguarding Policy

**Compliance:** This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed in the *Compliance with Regulations & Legislation Statement*.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

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This Policy is written in accordance with Part 1 – paragraphs 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii) and Part 2, of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations (2015).

Maple Grove School is a specialist, independent day school offering places to pupils aged 5 to 18. Places are offered to pupils who have complex needs including ASC, ADHD. A high number of our pupils may also have experienced early childhood trauma and may present with attachment difficulties.

Maple Grove School based in Hoole. The full national curriculum is taught from key stage 1 to key stage 4, adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils on three different pathways.

All of our children have experienced disruption to formal education. For some pupils, this has resulted in long periods of absence which has impacted on their self-esteem and self-confidence. In some cases, pupils have not attended formal education for up to four years.

The main special educational needs of our pupils are communication and interaction. Pupils can take meanings and context as literal, and this can impact on how their receive and perceive communication. Relationships, therefore, are challenging for our pupils, often because they struggle with the concept of forging and maintaining friendships due to complex needs and ASC related conditions. This can lead to confusion with relationships understanding whether relationships are positive and healthy and blurring the lines between friendship and other relationships. These patterns can also be present in pupils' online activity. Pupils also may have difficulty in understanding that there are different

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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

types of relationships. The curriculum and wider work, therefore us essential to ensure pupils have a full understanding and can make informed, appropriate choices and decisions.

### 2.0 MAPLE GROVE'S VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

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#### All pupils:

- Know that they are valued and have a sense of belonging in this world.
- They will have the self-belief, courage, and aspirations to follow their own journey through life.
- Will have a better understanding of their own mental health and have a range of helpful coping strategies to use through life.
- Understand who they are, be proud of who they are and can positively identify their own unique strengths and achievements.
- Become meaningful participants in, and contributors to, society, leaving with the skills and qualifications they require for their next steps in life.
- Will understand their own sensory differences and have a range of co-regulation and self-regulation strategies.
- Can communicate and self-advocate confidently, independently and effectively

We focus on development of self-esteem, self-confidence and self-knowledge to prepare pupils with the skills and values they need to participate fully in life in modern Britain when they transition from school.

“The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education...They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.”  
DfE Guidance p.8

### 3.0 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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In Key Stage 1 and 2 we teach Relationships education, and in Key Stage 3, 4 & 5, we teach Relationships and Sex education (RSE), with both Key Stages being taught Health Education, thus following the statutory guidance as set out by the Department of Education and the Independent School Standards.

While RSE is not mandatory for post-16 learners, we recognise the vulnerability of our pupils and the importance of the content. For this reason, we continue to support this aspect of learning in key stage 5. Pupils receive one to one targeted support where needed as well as weekly sessions to consolidate previous learning with a focus on their transition into adulthood.

In addition, at Maple Grove:

- Teaching reflects the law and teaches about applicable laws so that pupils are clear on rights and responsibilities
- Teaching is sensitive, inclusive, and age-appropriate teaching
- Teaching is inclusive to meet the needs of all pupils so that they can understand the importance of quality and respect
- Work closely with parents and are respectful of pupils' and parents' backgrounds and beliefs
- Communicate the right to request withdrawal from some or all the sex education
- Will consider the age and religious background of all pupils
- Make sure that RSHE is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- Teach about LGBT+ content at integrated and timely point
- Staff team and wider community model positive relationships

Maple Grove School complies with the Equality Act 2010:

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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

- We will not treat pupils with protected characteristics (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation less favourably.
- We will make reasonable adjustments and take positive action to alleviate disadvantage, being mindful of the SEND Code of Practice.
- We will regularly review our Accessibility Plan to ensure we are taking positive action towards inclusivity.

### 4.0 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

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This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- o Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- o Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- o Parent/stakeholder consultation – we wrote to parents to outline our plans for what is going to be taught and how. Parents and stakeholder views are considered. This policy will be shared with parents. Parents will be invited to share their views.
- o Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
- o Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

### 5.0 DEFINITION

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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.

### 6.0 CURRICULUM DELIVERY

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RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Additionally, from Year 7 and above the Relationships, Sex and Health Education qualification is delivered.

Parents have the right to request information of what is being taught and when. Additionally, they can request the resources that will be taught to their child.

#### Primary Curriculum

Relationships education in for Key Stage 1 and 2 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

The DfE Guidance 2019 (p.23) recommends that all primary schools 'have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.

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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

At Maple Grove School, we believe children should participate in a programme of sex education before they transition into secondary school.

We define sex education as understanding human reproduction. We believe that all children at our school should have access to a sex education programme to enable them to:

- Be safe
- Be provided with the correct scientific terminology and information and taught how to use it in the right context
- Make responsible, informed and healthy choices about their lives now and in the future
- Be respectful of themselves and others to enable them to move confidently through childhood, adolescence into adulthood
- Have the understanding to develop and maintain positive and healthy relationships

### Secondary Curriculum

Relationships and Sex Education for Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure 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, 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).

### Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities

All pupils at Maple Grove School have additional learning needs and all have an Education Health Care (EHC) Plan or Individual Development Plan (IDP). To make sure pupils are able to access the learning in the classroom resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the learning needs of children in order for them to have full access to the contents of the PSHE and RSE curriculum.

In most cases, class teachers will be able to determine if any additional support is required for an individual child to access the curriculum. In some cases, SLT and parents/carers may wish to work in partnership with the class teacher to tailor the curriculum for individual pupils.

### Equality

The DfE Guidance 2019 (p. 15) states, "Schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect.

Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics..."

LGBT content is integrated fully into our curriculum. It is not specifically taught as stand-alone lessons within units. All pupils will be taught LGBT+ content in an age-appropriate manner at a timely point in the curriculum.

At Maple Grove School we promote respect for all and value every individual

child. However, we also respect the rights of our children, families and our staff to hold beliefs, religious or otherwise.

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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Should any content within our curriculum cause parents or carers any concern then we would invite them in to discuss these concerns with the school.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### The Headteacher

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

#### Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- o Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- o Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- o Monitoring progress
- o Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- o Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory 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.

#### Pupils

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

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### 7.0 PARENTS RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

“Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Sex Education” DfE Guidance p.17

All staff at Maple Grove School we strongly believe that all children should have access to our sex education programme as outlined above.

If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child from Sex Education lessons, then they must inform the school in writing a week prior to the lesson taking place in order that alternative arrangements can be made for the child's education.

#### Key Stage 1 and 2

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

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

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.

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

There are separate rules on withdrawing a child from Sex Education. Sex education is separate from the Relationships and Health curriculum and parents can withdraw children from some or all the lessons on Sex Education. The head teacher must grant a parent's request to withdraw a child beforehand, and it's useful to have good conversations with parents so that they understand fully what their child will be taught.

‘Parents can only withdraw their children from sex education lessons in RSE, but not from any lessons regarding puberty as these are now statutory as part of Health Education.’ – **Jigsaw.**

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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Before making a request, parents should:

Ask the school about what will be taught in Sex Education, and when.

Remember that the science curriculum in all schools includes content on human development, which includes human reproduction.

Remember there is no right for a parent to withdraw their child from the science curriculum.

### Key Stage 3, 4 and 5

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory 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 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 and take appropriate action.

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

## 8.0 POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

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The senior leadership team monitor this policy on an annual basis.

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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy