



ARDEN

ACADEMY TRUST

Arden Academy (Arden) is an academy maintained by Arden Multi Academy Trust

Name of Policy	Relationships & Sex Education Policy	
Lead	Peter Simpson, Assistant Headteacher	
Governor Committee	Behaviour, Safety, Inclusion & Intervention Committee	
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	22/1/18 – no changes	
	September 2020 – further clarification given to the aims of the Policy	
	November 2022 – No Changes to policy	
	October 2024 – minor adjustments to language used.	

Introduction

Arden is a mixed comprehensive Academy for approximately 1800 boys and girls aged 11-18, with a Sixth Form. Many pupils are from middle class professional backgrounds. The intake represents a comprehensive ability range weighted towards the upper end and also caters for the education of pupils with statements of special educational needs or EHC Plans.

Definition

Relationship & Sex Education is teaching regarding sex, sexuality and sexual health. It concerns physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance and nature of stable and loving relationships.

Aims

The Relationship & Sex Relationship education programme has the following specific aims:-

1. To help students to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
2. To help students understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect and also the damaging effects a unhealthy relationship can have on their mental wellbeing.
3. To provide accurate and appropriate information about the nature of sexuality, human growth, reproduction and sexual health (incorporating STIs and HIV/AIDS), as well as having a greater knowledge and understanding of different methods of contraception.
4. To ensure that students know the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age appropriate and inclusive way.
5. To ensure students know about the sexual health support services available and how to access them.
6. To lead students to consider the physical, emotional and moral implications of sexual behavior and relationships including unplanned pregnancy.
7. To not encourage early sexual experimentation discussing the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay, including a consideration of the pressures they face to become sexually active.
8. To support students to develop through their life, at appropriate times, a safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationship.
9. To empower students to manage their relationships in a morally responsible and healthy way, ensuring that pupils understand that in intimate relationships there is a need for mutual consent as well as considering how to negotiate consent.
10. To raise awareness of the law relating to abusive relationships, forced marriages, and honour-based violence.

11. To empower students to understand how they can be at risk of sexual exploitation, including the concept of grooming and the awareness of predatory behavior with particular reference to e-safety as many students are now spending a substantial amount of time online.
12. To explore the implications of modern technology on Relationship and Sex Education, particularly exploring the dangers of sexting and the sending and receiving of explicit images.
13. To recognise the risks of having an online presence and how personal data is captured on social media. How to report harmful content and how to stay safe online.
14. To ensure that the pupils understand the laws relating to FGM and are aware of support services relating to this.
15. To encourage students to acknowledge that both parties bear an equal responsibility for their actions in sexual matters.
16. To foster a recognition of the importance of stable relationships for family life.
17. To explore the nature of people's sexuality and challenging gender stereotypes, sexual prejudice and discrimination.
18. To help students explore issues relating to gender identity and positive body images.
19. To understand the law in relation to long term commitments, civil partnerships and marriage.

Equal Opportunities

The Relationship & Sex Education Programme has been designed to meet the needs of all pupils.

Organisation

- The co-ordinator for the Relationship & Sex Education Programme is Assistant Headteacher, Mr Simpson and PSHE Lead, Miss Butler
- The programme is structured to ensure that all students receive their full entitlement regardless of option choices
- Elements of sex education are delivered through Science, PE, ICT and RE, together with the CPD / PSHE programme at KS3 and KS4
- Input from the Science, PE and ICT departments is largely of a factual nature. The work done in the CPD / PSHE builds on this information and encourages pupils to view their relationships in a morally responsible and healthy manner while equipping them with the skills to act upon reasoned decisions. The moral and ethical dimension of certain issues are explored by the RE department.

Teaching Strategies

1 Ground Rules

In order to create a safe environment in which neither teachers nor pupils feel embarrassed or anxious, ground rules are established:

- no-one will be forced to give a personal opinion in a whole class discussion
- no one will have to answer a personal question
- personal comments about individuals are completely unacceptable
- only the correct names for body parts will be used

2 Distancing Techniques

By de-personalising discussions embarrassment is avoided and pupils' privacy is protected. For example role plays, case studies, videos and where possible the use of theatre in education groups are used to help pupils discuss sensitive issues and develop decision-making skills through a structured activity in a safe environment.

3 Reflection

Pupils are encouraged to consolidate their learning and develop new understanding, skills and attitudes by reflection.

4 Resources

The resources used are selected carefully and are appropriate to the needs and ages of students; those dealing with relationship issues are consistent with the value placed on stable relationships and family life.

5 Dealing with Questions

- If a question is too personal, the teacher will remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person.
- If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question this will be acknowledged and it will be suggested that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question later.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about abuse, the teacher will acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the pupil will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. The teacher will then follow up with the individual pupil later.

NB. If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of abuse they will follow the Academy's child protection procedures.

Specific Issues Statements

1 Sensitivity regarding home circumstances

The Academy aims to foster a recognition of the importance of stable relationships and the importance of marriage for family life. However, it is recognized that some students may come from backgrounds which do not correspond to the ideal. Teachers will employ sensitivity to avoid causing personal hurt and giving unintentional offence.

2 Parents right to withdraw their child

At Arden Academy, Relationship & Sex Education is carefully structured to promote the development of the whole child. However, parents do have a statutory right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Relationship & Sex Education provided, except from that which forms part of the National Curriculum in Science. They are encouraged to discuss this fully with the staff of the Academy before making such an important decision. A parent who does wish to exercise this right should direct their request in writing to the Headteacher/Associate Headteacher specifying from which parts of the Relationship & Sex Education Programme their child is to be withdrawn.

3 Safeguarding entitlement

Pupils will not be withdrawn on an individual basis for Learning Support or intervention activities from lessons in Science, PE or PSHE when Relationship & Sex Education is being taught.

4 Pupil absence

Pupils who miss work relating to sex and relationship education in RE at KS3 and Science at KS3 and 4 will be expected to catch up this work when they return to the lessons. Pupils who miss work relating to Relationship & Sex Education in other areas will be provided with any materials/information issued when they return.

5 Visiting speakers

When visiting speakers contribute to the sex education programme they will be made aware of the Academy's sex education policy and their input will be known and agreed in advance. A teacher will remain in the room with the visitor.

6 Confidentiality

1. The Academy's function is to provide education about sexual matters. It is not the Academy's role to counsel or advise individual pupils on these matters specifically in relation to their own sexual behaviour.
2. To protect pupils' privacy ground rules and distancing techniques will be used in lessons.
3. Pupils will be informed when RSE lessons are being delivered in CPD / PSHE from Year 9 onwards that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
4. Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents / carers and supported where appropriate.

5. Pupils will be informed of sources of confidential help e.g. the Academy nurse, the local clinic.
6. Pupils will be reassured that their best interests will be maintained.
7. Pupils will be reassured that if confidentiality has to be broken they will be informed first and supported as appropriate.
8. A teacher who is approached by an individual pupil for specific advice on Sexual Health, Sexual Behaviour or Contraceptive Advice will follow the Academy's Confidentiality Policy including the flowchart for dealing with disclosures of personal information (see Appendix 1).
9. The Headteacher/Associate Headteacher and governors responsible for child protection will ensure that there is adequate advice and monitor if there are trends and alert the Governing body if necessary.
10. If there is any possibility of abuse the Academy's child protection procedure will be followed.

Working with Parents

The teaching offered by the Academy aims to be complementary and supportive to the role of parents. The Academy seeks to keep parents fully informed and to invite further dialogue where appropriate.

- 1 The Relationship & Sex Education Policy is to be available for inspection by parents of registered pupils at the Academy and copies will be provided free of charge to any such parent who requests one.
- 2 Information regarding the content of our curriculums are made available on our website:

Any parent wishing to examine resources, or to discuss the sex education provision further on an individual basis are invited to contact the Assistant Headteacher, Mr Simpson.
- 3 A summary of the content and organisation of the sex education programme will be included on the Academy website.

Dissemination of the Policy

- 1 A copy of the Relationship & Sex Education Policy is made available to all staff, particularly those departments actively involved in the delivery of the programme i.e. Science, PE, RE and PSHE.
- 2 Key excerpts from the policy are to be part of staff induction.
- 3 A copy of the policy is to be given to all visitors making an input to the sex education programme.
- 4 The new arrangements for sex education are to be made known through the prospectus. Copies of the full policy are to be provided free to parents of registered pupils on request.

Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 1 Subject departments have responsibility for producing their own schemes of work as appropriate.
- 2 Assistant Headteacher, Mr Simpson, has responsibility for monitoring of schemes of work. These will be reviewed and updated as necessary each autumn in conjunction with the appropriate Head of Department.
- 3 Assistant Headteacher, Mr Simpson, has responsibility for evaluating aspects of the programme at the end of each year. This will be done through both staff and pupil feedback.
- 4 The Governors will review the policy every two years.

Appendix 1

Student Confidentiality

All academies are required by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to “**promote the wellbeing of pupils at the Academy**”. An effective Relationship and Sex Education programme that promotes speedy referral to confidential services can help academies to demonstrate how they promote pupil wellbeing and help young people to achieve the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework.

All young people including those aged under 16 are entitled to confidential sexual health and contraceptive advice and treatment. Improving access to confidential sexual health services both in academies and in the community is one of the ways in which academies help their pupils to stay safe and avoid health outcomes that have a negative impact on their learning.

Concerns about confidentiality and subsequent lack of trust are the main barriers that stop young people from accessing sexual health advice and treatment. Yet survey data suggests that about one third of young people have had sex by the time they are 16. These same young people are also the least likely to access contraceptive and sexual health advice services which increases the risk to their health and wellbeing. Although Relationship & Sex Education supports young people to delay early sexual activity, secondary academies also have a duty to promote the wellbeing of those pupils who, for whatever reason (including coercion and abuse) experience early and often unprotected sex.

There is strong and consistent support from the DfE for Academics to promote service provision as part of teaching and learning within CPD / PSHE. **“We want all young people to know where to access sexual health advice and to feel confident to do so.”** At Arden we will ensure that young people in the Academy within PSHE lessons are provided with precise details of local services and that up to date details of local services are available to allow speedy referrals to local advice.

All staff at Arden no matter what their role within the Academy, need to have a good working knowledge of the Academy’s Confidentiality and Safeguarding policies as well as the pupils themselves.

Staff in the school can never promise unconditional or absolute confidentiality. At Arden therefore, in the classroom, the aim is to strike a balance between helping pupils to feel respected, safe and able to participate fully and openly while still protecting privacy and safeguarding welfare. Therefore if a teacher, health professional or other classroom visitor hears or sees something to suggest a young person in the group or another young person is at risk of serious harm or of causing serious harm to others, they need to talk to another professional about it. They would talk to the young person first and try to get them to agree to this. **Sharing information without consent is only recommended if it is in the child’s best interests to do so and there is a clear risk of significant harm to the young person or to others.**

Although it is accepted best practice in education to encourage a young person to talk to a parent/carer about any worries they may have, **they cannot be made to do so against their wishes. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents of any disclosure. However members of staff at Arden are advised to refer the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) before they promote action or offer advice themselves**

Although the legal age of consent is 16, the law is not intended to be used to prosecute mutually agreed teenage sexual activity between two young people of a similar age unless this sexual activity involves abuse or exploitation. **At Arden, if it is established or suspected that sexual activity involves abuse or exploitation, action and reporting must be undertaken in line with the Academy's Child Protection Policy. Individual members of staff are not expected to investigate possible abuse, but they do have a key role to play by referring any concerns to their DSL.**

For purposes of clarification the following information needs to be adhered to by the Academy.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Refer to our Child Protection Policy.

Under 13

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, a child aged 12 or under is not capable of consenting to sexual activity and penetrative sex is classified as rape. *At Arden* if a disclosure is made of penetrative sex or other intimate sexual activity, the member of staff should refer to the DSL, who would follow the recommended procedures.

13 – 15 year olds

The legal age of consent is 16. Staff may feel that sex under 16 is too early, but the law does not wish to criminalise young people who are in a mutual sexual relationship. *At Arden* if a disclosure is made by a 13 – 15 year old of underage sex, it may be appropriate although it is not a legal requirement, to assess whether there are any serious consequences for the welfare of the young person. Any cases of concern should be referred to the DSL if a case of abuse is suspected or the member of staff feels that the pupil is at risk or in potential danger. During these discussions it is our expectation at Arden that the names of the pupil(s) involved are known in order to make the best judgment if and when further action is deemed necessary. The Head of Year or the DSL will then determine whether or not to initiate child protection procedures.⁹

16 – 17 year olds

Although sexual activity involving this age category is unlikely to involve an offence, at Arden discussion with the Head of Year and/or the DSL is advised and subsequent action by them may be appropriate if staff suspect serious harm or the risk of serious harm.

Confidentiality notices are displayed around the school buildings.

Dealing with Disclosures of Personal Information

Refer to the 'Guiding Principles for all Staff and Volunteers for Dealing with Disclosures' as detailed in the Child Protection Policy.