

DEMAT Relationships Education Policy Statement (Including Sex Education)

All primary schools are required to teach Relationships Education and Health Education. Secondary schools will be required to teach Relationships Education and Sex Education. The legislation makes it clear that all schools should approach RSHE in a faith sensitive and inclusive way, seeking to explain fairly the tenets and varying interpretations of religious communities on matters of sex and relationships and teach these viewpoints with respect.

The National Society supports the approach taken by the government, including recommending an age-appropriate provision of Sex Education at primary level. The National Society has issued documents with accompanying guidance to support Church of England schools as they develop policy in this area, links can be found below. In their policy development, schools should make reference to the principles established by the Church of England's Pastoral Advisory Group which has set out some principles for living well together with difference and diversity and in Valuing All God's Children.

In the development of this policy statement consideration has been given to Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Data Protection.

Safeguarding

The Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT) understands the importance of high-quality Relationships Education in fulfilling statutory safeguarding duties. Relationship Education enables pupils to understand about mutual, consensual and reciprocated relationships in all their forms. Whether the children are learning about friendships, families, relationships in school or the wider community, they will be developing essential skills which underpin their ability to recognise abusive relationships. Teaching about 'Family and Friends' and 'Anti-bullying' enables schools to fulfil their statutory duty to prevent 'peer-on-peer' abuse. In the case of RSE and Personal Safety, we recognise that effective teaching may alert children to what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour (including inappropriate sexual behaviour) and that there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. RSE and Personal Safety enable us to fulfil our duty to prevent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). All staff must be aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and report disclosures or concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

Equality and Diversity

DEMAT is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. The Trust aims to create a supportive and inclusive working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit. We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age; race; sex; disability; sexual

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orientation; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; religion, faith or belief (Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics). The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff and Governors treat visitors, volunteers, contractors and former staff members.

Data Protection

DEMAT will process personal data of staff (which may be held on paper, electronically, or otherwise). DEMAT recognises the need to treat this data in an appropriate and lawful manner, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

	Version	Date
Date approved by the DEMAT Standards and Ethos Committee	1	18/03/21
Date on which the DEMAT consulted with the unions if applicable	NA	NA
Effective date as determined by DEMAT		30/04/21
Policy statement to be reviewed annually from date last approved by DEMAT Standards and Ethos Committee		March 2022

For all questions in relation to this policy statement please contact your School Performance Director to seek further information.

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Application of the Policy Statement

DEMAT is committed to following the statutory guidance set out by DfE within Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education document.

[Link to DfE Statutory Guidance](#)

This policy statement is to be used by all employees of The Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT). Each school in the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust shall develop, adopt and adhere to a local, personalised Relationships Education Policy which reflects the core values of the MAT: Love, Community, Trust, Respect and Ambition and this policy statement. Each Church school in the MAT shall also make specific reference to the distinctive Christian vision and ethos of the school when formulating local, personalised versions of this policy.

In the personalisation of their policy, schools are encouraged to refer to the following documents for consideration and guidance:

Church of England RSE Principles and Church of England Charter

[Link to Church of England RSHE Principles and Charter_0.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#)

Faith sensitive and inclusive Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (RSHE)

[Link to Relationships, Sex and Health Education | The Church of England](#)

Unit 3B Notes on Personalising the Relationships Education Policy in Your School

Unit 3C Discussing the Aims of RSE

Unit 3D Discussing your School's Ethos and Values Statements

Unit 3E Personalising the Relationships Education Policy in a C of E School

[Link to Cambridgeshire PSHE Service Documents](#)

1. Introduction

Since September 2020, Relationships Education and Health Education have become statutory in all schools which teach primary aged children. The content of these two newly statutory curriculum areas has been taught for many years in most of our schools as part of a broad Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. We advocate to our schools that Relationships Education and Health Education continue to be taught in this broader context, allowing for individual schools to include non-statutory content, in order to meet the specific needs of their pupils.

2. Definition of Relationships Education

DEMAT describes Relationships Education as learning about emotional, social and physical aspects of our lives, about ourselves and our relationships. It enables pupils to develop essential life skills for building and maintaining positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships. It equips pupils with information and skills they need to understand about themselves, their peers and people they meet in the wider community. It explores risks, choices, rights, responsibilities and attitudes. It will help pupils to develop skills to keep themselves and others safer, physically and emotionally, both on and off line. Relationships Education enables pupils to explore their own attitudes and those of others respectfully.

The new statutory content for Relationships Education includes learning about: Families and people who care for me, Caring Friendships, Respectful relationships, Online relationships and Being safe.

Relationships Education makes a significant contribution to the fulfilment of the aims of each DEMAT school. Each school, in their personalised policy will describe this contribution. The Cambridgeshire Personal Development Programme provides specific guidance for Church of England schools on personalising the model policy. Each school will publish their personalised Relationships Education Policy (including Sex Education) on their school website.

3. Definition of Sex Education

Following guidance from the DfE, we define Sex Education as learning about ‘how a (human) baby is conceived and born’.

This extends the learning about sexual reproduction in ‘some plants and animals’ required through the Science national curriculum. It also complements the statutory requirement to teach about puberty as part of Science and Health Education, as understanding sexual reproduction in humans enables children to understand the processes of puberty.

Each DEMAT school will, using the Cambridgeshire PSHE Service Policy model, arrive at a locally agreed definition of Sex Education and each local governing body will, having consulted with parents/carers and other stakeholders, decide whether Sex Education will be taught in addition to the requirements of the national curriculum for Science.

When a school has decided to follow the DfE recommendation to deliver Sex Education, we advocate that schools should deliver this content in the context of Relationships Education and Health Education, for example in a topic called Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). (See Cambridgeshire PSHE Service RSE Units of Work)

4. Delivery of Relationships Education (and Sex Education)

Each DEMAT school has access to the Cambridgeshire Personal Development Programme (PDP) which comprises Units of Work covering all aspects of statutory Relationships Education, Health Education and non-statutory Sex Education. These materials are based on a progressive, spiral curriculum, which provides age-appropriate teaching opportunities and resources. Each school should use the materials, alongside any others they choose, to meet the needs of their pupils, selecting and prioritising as required.

Our schools are also advised to refer to the Cambridgeshire PDP RSE Toolkit for documents to guide policy development and personalisation, consultation with parents/carers, development of staff confidence and assessment of pupil needs and views.

Schools are advised to encourage staff to use a range of teaching methodologies, having established a safe learning environment through the collective agreement of Ground Rules.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Each school has a responsibility to:

- Ensure their staff feel confident to deliver high quality Relationships Education and Sex Education

- Support staff by offering training where relevant
- Engage with the needs of pupils through formative assessment, evaluation of work and wider pupil voice activity
- Involve their local governing board in policy development and related decision making
- Communicate with parents/carers about curriculum content in order to support the partnership between home and school
- Consult with parents/carers about the policy for Relationships Education and Sex Education, when it is developed or reviewed, and take their views into account
- Ensure that any resources or organisations supporting the delivery of Relationships Education and Sex Education in their school are aware of the school policy and have aims compatible with those of the school.

In each school we advocate that:

- A curriculum PSHE leader is identified to ensure coverage, progression and quality in Relationship Education and Sex Education
- The curriculum leader reports to the Head Teacher/Senior Leader

6. Involvement of Parents/Carers, Pupils and Staff

6.1 Parents/Carers

Schools should always work in partnership with parents/carers, communicating with them regularly on the content of Relationships Education programmes. Parents/carers need to know that the school's RSE education programme will complement and support their role as parents/carers and that they can be actively involved in the determination of the school's policy.

Parents/carers are the key people in:

- teaching their children about relationships;
- maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;
- helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up; and
- preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

6.2 Pupils

Pupils themselves will be asked to review their learning and to share views about their needs. There is guidance on methodologies for evaluation in the Cambridgeshire PDP.

6.3 Staff

Staff should have the opportunity to discuss the Relationships Education and Sex Education policy, reviewing content and delivery to ensure that their knowledge is up-to-date and they are able to deliver lessons confidently, to meet the children's needs.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Each school should review and evaluate their provision, gathering information from pupils, staff and teachers. Information gathered to shape the comprehensive review may include

information about pupil progress and attainment, feedback from the teachers about the curriculum provision and staff confidence, views of parents/carers, parent/carer comments and concerns, level of parent/carer withdrawal from Sex Education.

The governing body in each school should take the same interest in this area of the curriculum as it does for all other subject areas.

8. Confidentiality

Each school should have a Confidentiality Policy which is clearly communicated to staff, parents/carers and pupils.

- Staff are unable to offer absolute confidentiality.
- Any concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding lead.
- Staff will reassure children that staff will act in their best interests and that this may involve sharing information if the child is at risk of harm.
- Children will be told if information is to be shared (taking special care with very young children or those with significant special needs) and will be offered appropriate support.

9. Right to be excused from Sex Education

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from statutory Relationships Education, however, parents/carers do have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of Sex Education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Each school must communicate their right clearly to parents/carers in their policy. We advocate that school leaders use resources from the Cambridgeshire PDP RSE Toolkit to develop their approaches to responding to parental requests to withdraw from Sex Education.

Before granting any such request the Head Teacher/PSHE Leader will discuss the request with parents/carers (and if appropriate with the child) to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The educational, social and emotional benefits for the child of being part of the lessons will also be discussed. The outcomes of the discussion will be recorded.

Schools are encouraged to consider compromise arrangements which will enable parents/carers to feel more comfortable with their child's participation and to review their decision on a regular basis.
