

# RSE Statement

This statement was developed in response to Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education, June 2019.

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way.

'To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health, and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Students can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges, and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.' (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019)

Young people with learning difficulties often have increased vulnerability to a range of RSE issues, meaning that it is even more important to teach students how to recognise and deal with problems they may face both now and in their futures.

## **What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?**

RSE equips young people with essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful, and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline. It involves acquiring information, knowing the law, developing skills, and forming positive beliefs, values, and attitudes.

The term RSE is used in this policy to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage and maintain relationships.

## **Principles and Values**

At Endeavour Academy we believe that RSE should:

Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.

Be an entitlement for all young people.

Encourage every student to contribute to our community and support them as they grow and learn.

Be set within the wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge, and openness without promotion of any particular family structure.

Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views.

Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.

Recognise that parents and carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them about the content of programmes.

Acknowledge that the wider community has much to offer and work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors and advisers.

Support students to discuss and be aware of genders and gender identification.

### **Aims of RSE in our school**

The aim of RSE at Endeavour Academy is to provide balanced, factual, and non-biased information about relationships, reproduction and wider contexts including emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions for a range of topics. Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

Develop awareness of the physical self, how it functions and how changes occur over time.

Develop practical strategies for self-management of body actions such as menstruation, puberty, and related physical changes.

Develop awareness of emotions and how they relate to behaviour of self and others.

Develop understanding of how physical changes can affect emotional responses (female & male hormonal changes) and to help students to manage these independently.

Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements, and behaviour

Develop the confidence to value themselves and others, respect their individual conscience, and judge what kind of relationship they want.

Develop awareness of the differing natures and levels of relationships and the codes of conduct relating to them.

Develop an awareness of different 'life choices' with regard to transitions from school and home.

Develop awareness of codes of conduct governing sexual expression & sexuality, particularly in relation to understanding the concepts and implications of 'public' & 'private' behaviours.

Help students to develop strategies for 'keeping safe' and for protecting themselves against exploitation and abuse.

Understand the physical aspects of reproduction, contraception, and sexual health as appropriate to the age and cognitive ability of individual students.

Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.

Develop awareness of themselves including their core beliefs and values, sexuality, and opinions.

Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support, and treatment if necessary

Know how the law applies to a range of topics including alcohol, drugs, sex, and consent.

Develop an understanding of how social networks/media portray body image and sexuality.

Develop knowledge of responses to peer pressure.

### **A Personalised Approach**

A specialised programme of RSE has been developed within Endeavour Academy. The programme takes into account the individual learning needs of all students. Teachers have a copy of the whole school RSE framework and access to recommended resources for teaching. The programmes of study are adapted and personalised appropriately to meet the cognitive levels of each student.

For some young people with a learning disability, it may be confusing or alarming when physical and emotional changes occur. At Endeavour Academy we aim to develop strategies for coping with change as they grow and develop physically and emotionally.

Many students may not understand the 'rules' of society 'naturally' and their understanding of what behaviour is acceptable may be impaired. At Endeavour Academy we aim to support young people in learning these social rules and to understand when it is safe and appropriate to express their sensual feelings.

It may not be appropriate for all students to cover every aspect of the curriculum. For some, it will be appropriate to teach only the functional aspects of the curriculum that have relevance to the individuals concerned. For a minority of students, it is more appropriate to address specific areas of difficulty as and when they occur and to continue to work on early development objectives at other times.

RSE interventions are also available and planned throughout the week for more focused and personalised sessions on a 1:1 basis for any students needing further support with a particular area of need. Staff, parents, and carers can request additional support if they have a particular RSE concern regarding a student. These requests will be discussed, and staff will decide on the best action to support the student.

### **Curriculum Content & Strategies**

Endeavour Academy personalises provision for students in different curriculum pathways. Below is a table to show some of the key aspects usually taught in RSE, however content is selected based on a student's cognitive understanding, age, and personalised targets. Students are only taught about more sensitive topics when staff feel they are ready to understand this information and use it appropriately and safely.

Whilst some knowledge is taught in discrete RSE lessons, others are embedded across the curriculum giving students opportunities to apply their understanding to a range of contexts.

Where possible, we provide an interactive learning environment to motivate students. Students are provided with exciting and engaging opportunities to apply skills and knowledge to ensure learning is functional, purposeful, and reflective. We have a range of RSE resources accessible to all Students to further their understanding, engagement, and independence in a range of areas.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of RSE**

RSE evidence is captured and assessed in the same way as other curriculum areas.

RSE is taught as a timetabled lesson (PSHE). It is the responsibility of the RSE Co-ordinator alongside SLT to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of RSE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

Endeavour Academy is responsible for overseeing, reviewing, and organising the revision of the Relationship and Sex Education Policy. Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on the Quality of Education that students receive, as well as Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. This includes evaluating and commenting on the school's RSE policy, and on support and staff development, training, and delivery.

### **Right to Withdraw**

As stated by the Department for Education in statutory guidance published June 2019, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from some, or all, of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Please note, the right to withdraw is for sex education only and does not include content delivered as part of relationships education or as part of the statutory science curriculum. If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child from any part of sex education, they need to contact school to have a discussion with the Head Teacher, so that we can be made aware of the reasons and provide alternative arrangements. The request to withdraw a child from sex education can be made up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should include the young person in sex education provision.