



Hidelow Grange School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

	Reviewed: Oct 2024 – Sam Goodchild
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Author: Becky Cooper	
Role: Head teacher	
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Description and Ethos of Hidelow Grange School

Hidelow Grange is an Independent School operating within the Branas Isaf Company, a subsidiary of CareTech Community Services Ltd., who are the proprietors.

Hidelow Grange is an independent school providing specialist education to boys aged 11 to 18 years with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, and who are Looked After Children. The school specifically caters for boys who present with a range of complex interpersonal, emotional and behavioural issues.

For a more detailed description of what the school offers see “Statement of Independence” and School Prospectus.

OUR PUPILS

All young people at Hidelow Grange School have a history of harmful behaviours, including harmful sexualised behaviours and social, emotional and mental health needs often accompanied by a range of additional learning needs.

Most of the pupils have had interrupted histories in education and care. There are a wide variety of attainments on admission. All have fragile self-esteem and demonstrate difficulties with authority and a lack of trust in adults. Many have experienced loss and trauma, leading to attachment difficulties. As a result, many experience difficulties in forming and maintaining appropriate, positive relationships with others and have a limited ability to work cooperatively.

Pupils are:

- aged 11 to 18;
- boys only;
- placed within the residential setting of Branas Isaf;
- residents from placing authorities throughout the United Kingdom;
- all present a range of harmful behaviours;
- most are in receipt of an EHC plan.

THE VISION

Our school aspires to become a centre of excellence renowned for making outstanding educational provision for the very special pupils we teach.

This vision drives everything we do and will be achieved through...

- A rich, deep and personalised education designed to meet the needs of each pupil;
- A pupil centred, skills focused curriculum that is relevant to the 21st century and inclusive of all;

- Encouraging all members of the school community to strive beyond expectations and develop a lifelong love of learning;
- Offering a broad range of learning experiences within a curriculum that values academic attainment as well as social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of education;
- Providing personalised careers education and guidance, with aspirational next steps planning, preparing pupils for their future;
- Recognising that time is precious: working quickly to turn around pupils' attitudes towards education so they enjoy their time at school and make the most of the opportunities on offer;
- Working collaboratively with our professional partners to support the needs of each individual pupil.

Pupils will:

1. Be challenged to engage in learning and achieve meaningful qualifications that will enable them to take their next steps in education, employment or training;
2. Develop into healthy, resilient and confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society;
3. Create, nurture and maintain healthy positive relationships with others;
4. Experience success, whatever form it takes;
5. Become enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in life and work;
6. Celebrate diversity and develop into ethical, informed young people who are ready to be citizens of the world.

OUR MISSION

Our mission statement is:

We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that nurtures mutual respect and encourages reflection so that our pupils develop the knowledge skills and confidence to enable them to achieve their potential in all aspects of their lives.

OUR VALUES AND INTENT

Our values

- **Aspiration** : We encourage each other to be the best we can be
- **Curiosity**: We never stop learning and wondering about the world
- **Independence**: We think for ourselves and determine our own future
- **Innovation**: We look for new and creative solutions to problems
- **Reflection**: We learn from our experiences
- **Tolerance**: We value difference and respect other people's opinions
- **Trust**: We believe in the honesty and reliability of others

Our Curriculum Intent

For our staff: Everyone at Hidelow supports and challenges pupils to invest in education as a priority for a successful placement

For all learners:

- To undergo an initial 6-week assessment so we fully understand their needs for effective learning;
- To achieve at least 95% attendance in school;
- To engage in creative learning experiences appropriate to their needs, supported by an accurate individual learning plan;
- To achieve nationally recognised academic awards in core subjects;
- To achieve accreditation in a wide range of subject areas;
- To become independent learners;
- To learn how to keep themselves safe, and build positive relationships with those around them;
- To take part in decisions that shape their lives, the school and the community in which they live;
- To demonstrate the behaviours needed to stretch themselves and cope with the challenges of learning;
- To attend and participate in regular therapy sessions;
- To learn strategies to manage their feelings and know where to go for help when things are difficult;
- To have the opportunity to participate in work experience and work related learning opportunities;
- To develop the Literacy skills they need for adult life;
- To learn the skills to apply mathematical concepts;
- To learn the skills to use digital technologies creatively and safely in preparation for the world in which they will live;
- To lead healthy, active lifestyles;
- To develop as social, moral, spiritual and culturally aware individuals who are ready to make a positive contribution to society as adults.

RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) Policy

Rationale

One of our core aims is for all pupils to ‘learn how to keep themselves safe, and build positive relationships with those around them’ (see above). The RSE programme at our school is fundamental to enabling us to achieve this aim. We understand the importance of educating pupils about sex and relationships so they can make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives. This is particularly important for our students who all have exhibited harmful behaviour or experienced abusive relationships, loss and personal trauma in the past.

‘Sex and Relationship Education Guidance’ (DfE) defines RSE as: “Learning about physical, moral and emotional development; understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and health.” At our school we teach RSE objectively, without prejudice and do not promote any form of sexual orientation.

Hidelow Grange School takes pride in offering a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, catering for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) is central to this and is delivered as a discreet subject. The majority of RSE is taught in these lessons, supported and complemented by work in other subjects and through the ethos of the school as a whole.

This policy was produced in consultation with the Care and Therapy teams. Parents, Social Workers and Virtual Schools were also invited to comment.

Aims and objectives

Our RSE programme is an opportunity for pupils to develop their understanding of:

- Relationships of all kinds including friendships, family, on-line and intimate relationships;
- Sex and sexuality;
- The importance of family life;
- The biological facts related to human growth and development, including reproduction;
- Recognising and forming positive personal identities;
- Empathy and their abilities to work with others;
- The interplay between relationships and mental wellbeing- including loss, separation, divorce and bereavement;
- Recognising and managing risks;
- Bullying;
- Knowing when and where to access help and support;
- The importance of healthy relationships and the characteristics of these.

Through our programme, pupils will practice and develop their personal, interpersonal and social skills; and explore, clarify and, sometimes, challenge their own and others' attitudes, values and beliefs and moral reasoning in relation to a range of issues.

Content of RSE programme

The PSHCE programme follows a spiral curriculum to develop and embed key skills and knowledge over time. We follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study- please refer to this and the PSHCE Overview for more detail. Topics covered include: Difference and diversity- tolerance, equality, prejudice and stereotyping; Puberty, menstruation, masturbation and personal hygiene; Healthy relationships- keeping yourself safe from exploitation, coercion, peer pressure and gangs; Local and National Sexual Health agencies and services; On-line safety including youth-produced sexual imagery, and forming relationships on-line; Sexuality; Body image, body confidence and the media; Pornography, sex and the law.

The Science programme follows the National Curriculum Programme for Study for Science. In Key Stage 3 pupils learn the scientific facts surrounding sexual reproduction, specifically they will develop knowledge and understanding about gametes, fertilisation, the male and female reproductive systems, sexual reproduction, puberty, the menstrual cycle, pregnancy and birth. During this unit pupils will also learn about the legal age of consent, the emotional and health aspects of sex and discuss why it is sensible not to have sex until you are over the age of 16. In Key

stage 4 pupils develop their knowledge further learning about DNA, mitosis, meiosis and genetic inheritance. Knowledge and understanding is embedded through additional work and discussion as part of the PSHCE curriculum.

In addition to the planned schemes of work for PSHCE and Science, the school participates in National Anti-Bullying Week every year.

The content of the RSE programme will be delivered through a variety of teaching methods, resources and interactive activities including cards sort, quizzes, discussion, debate, educational film clips, flour babies project, imaginary case studies or real events from the media. Visitors and organisations such as *InfoBuzz* may also be invited into school to complement the programme.

Creating a safe learning environment

Much of the content of this subject area touches on sensitive issues which may provoke strong emotional reactions including distress or embarrassment. Teachers create a climate of trust, cooperation and support.

The class establish Ground Rules that apply in all PSHCE lessons. These rules refer to: respect; confidentiality and when this will be broken; thinking carefully before sharing personal information; the right to leave the room if necessary; the use of the correct language; and the right to decline to answer personal questions.

Distancing techniques will be used such imaginary scenarios; discussing issues in the third person; discussing issues without using names.

Teachers will be conscious of expressing their own views and opinions and when they do so, will work within the school's values, policies and the law.

When an open learning environment has been created, pupils feel able to ask questions throughout the lesson. They will also be encouraged to ask questions anonymously prior to the lesson using the Suggestions Box. At times, pupils may ask difficult questions. These do not need to be answered immediately: it may be more appropriate to address them later once the teacher has had time to give careful consideration to the answer. Whenever possible age-appropriate factual answers will be given.

Consideration will also be given to the size and dynamics of the teaching group and who is best placed to deliver particular content.

The role of the multi-agency team

Due to the particular needs and vulnerabilities of our students, we will liaise with the Therapy and Home teams to let them know our curriculum plans for each student at least half a term in advance. This will allow them to advise teachers about any content that may cause a particular issue for any of the young people concerned, and alert them to the need to follow up any issues that might arise from lessons in school. In some circumstances it might be agreed to remove a pupil for particular content and to cover this in 1-1 sessions led by the therapist or key worker.

Diversity and inclusion

We recognise that the pupils we teach are vulnerable to exploitation and to forming unhealthy relationships in the future. As a result of the sensitive nature of the subject content, and the specific needs of our pupils, certain aspects of SRE may be taught individually, or at the time agreed is most appropriate in discussion with Care and Therapy. Throughout the school day, every pupil has access to one-to-one support from a member of the Care Team as well as a named tutor who can offer pastoral support as required. Support for individual pupils will be provided through therapy, tutor support and key-work sessions.

We are sensitive to the range of religious and cultural views about sexual behaviour whilst still ensuring that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. We include clear, impartial scientific information on matters such as the changes of puberty, abortion and assisted conception, as well as covering the law in relation to, for example, forced-marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

Our PSHCE programme covers the concept of equality and the legislation relating to it. We recognise that as a school we have specific responsibilities in relation to equality and protected characteristics. Our RSE programme aims to foster gender and LGBT+ equality, challenge all forms of prejudice, discrimination and bullying. We are respectful of how pupils choose to identify themselves, understanding that their sexual orientation and gender identity may be 'emerging'.

Right to be excused/ withdrawn from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. This right does not apply to relationships education, health education or science.

Parents should make their request to the Headteacher. Before granting any such request the Headteacher will discuss the request with the child's parents, therapist, social worker and care team, and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. A record will be kept of this process along with the decisions made.

In this discussion, the Headteacher will ensure parents understand the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, 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 will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. There may be exceptional circumstances where

the Headteacher may take a pupil's specific special educational needs into account when making this decision.

Safeguarding and child protection

Effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. The school Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures will be followed.

Statutory framework

Hidelow Grange School has due regard for *The Equality Act (2010)*; the (draft) statutory guidance *Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education (DfE, 2019)* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)*.

MONITORING

The RSE programme and policy are regularly evaluated and reviewed by the PSHE co-ordinator. The views of pupils, parents, staff and governors are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis.

Roles & Responsibilities

Teaching Staff	Qualifications
Sam Goodchild Headteacher; DSL; LAC; Teacher: PE	BSc (Hons) in Sports Studies; PGCE: Secondary Education
Charlotte James DDSL; SENCO; Exams Officer; Teacher: Maths, ICT, Art	BA (Hons) in Primary Education specialising in SEND
Mark Maddock 0.6 FTE Teacher: Science, DT	B.SC. (Hons): Applied Zoology (with Agriculture); PGCE in Biology and Science (Distinction in Teaching Practice) Post-Graduate Certificate of SEN
Victoria Cooper Teacher: English; Enrichment	BA (Hons) English Literature and minor Religious Studies; Dip (HE) Diploma in Community, Youth and Play Work; PGCE Secondary English

Juliet Smith Teacher: PSHE; Humanities; Art; Enrichment	BA (Hons) in Humanities with History; PGCE Secondary Geography
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REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head Teacher and Head of Education Services. It will be due for review in October 2025.

REFERENCES

Certain points discussed in this policy may be investigated in greater detail through referring to the following policies and documents listed below:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing
- PSHCE Overview
- The PSHE Education Association Programme of Study
- Education for a Connected World (DfE, 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)