

Sex and Relationships Policy



COOMBE HOUSE
SCHOOL

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Approved by company:	Board of Directors	
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1 Aims

The aims of sex and relationships education at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

2 Statutory requirements

At Coombe House School (“the School”) we broadly follow the National Curriculum and teach sex and relationships education as set out in this policy.

In teaching sex and relationship education, we have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

3 Policy development

The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation – all school staff are consulted regarding the policy and are encouraged to make recommendations.
3. Parent /carer / stakeholder consultation – parent / carers and any interested parties will be invited to share their thoughts and feedback about the policy.
4. Pupil consultation – we will work with pupils along with the stakeholders to help develop appropriate personalised programmes

4 Definition

Sex and relationship education is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

Sex and relationship education involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

Sex and relationship education is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5 Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out within our PSHE Curriculum, but to respond to changes or contextual issues, we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We will look to further develop the curriculum in consultation with parent / carers, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, allowing themselves additional time to undertake research or seek out additional support if necessary, so they are fully informed so to minimise them seeking answers online.

Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 sets out typical expectations for the knowledge and understanding that pupils will typically have by the end of primary and secondary education. However, in a specialist setting such as ours, provision and learning may be personalised to respond to individual need.

The delivery of the curriculum is always done with understanding and sensitivity for any pupils who may have experienced adverse experiences in their lives, which may impact on their thoughts, feelings and emotions when learning this topic.

The proposed curriculum content is shared at the start of the academic year with ongoing communication between the school and home on the topics to be covered in upcoming sessions.

For more information about our curriculum, see the PSHE curriculum, which is available upon request.

6 Delivery of Sex and Relationship Education

Sex and relationship education is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) sessions.

Primary sex and relationships education 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

Secondary sex and relationship education 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 / carer families, LGBT parent / carers, 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).

The School acknowledges that a higher number of pupils may have a greater variety of family / care arrangements than might exist in a typical school and so takes additional care in this regard.

7 Roles and responsibilities

The Board

The Board will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that sex and relationship education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of sex and relationship education (see section 8).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering sex and relationship education in a robust, thorough, and sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to sex and relationship education
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents or carers wish them to be withdrawn from the components of sex and relationship education.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching sex and relationship education. Staff who have concerns about teaching sex and relationship are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Pupils

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

8 Parent / Carers' right to withdraw

Parent / Carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory / non-science components of sex education within sex and relationship education 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 student's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parent / carers and take appropriate action.

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

9 Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of sex and relationship education.

Where appropriate, the Headteacher will invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching sex and relationship education.

10 Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of sex and relationship education is monitored by the School Leadership Team through monitoring arrangements, such as lesson observations, planning scrutiny etc.

Pupils' development in sex and relationship education is monitored by teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the programme delivery lead on an annual basis. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governance team.

11 Version control

Date of adoption of this policy, by or on behalf of the Proprietor	March 2023
Date of last review of this policy	February 2024
Date for next review of this policy	February 2025
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Dorset Centre of Excellence

Appendix 1: By the end of primary pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online

Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)• About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other contact• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult• How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard• How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so• Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources
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Appendix 2: By the end of secondary pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parent / carers with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in

	the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal
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TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships • How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing • About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 3: Parent / Carer form: withdrawal from sex education within sex and relationships education

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT / CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent / carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within sex and relationships education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent / Carer signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parent / carers	