



# RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY (ACADEMIES)

**The OHC&AT Board of Trustees has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies across all OHCAT Academies – 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**

Jay Mercer

Chair of OHCAT Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Mercer", is written over a horizontal line.

# Relationships & Sex Education Policy (Academies)

## INTRODUCTION

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. OHC&AT is a 'family' of providers, comprising Orchard Hill College (OHC) and Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT), which works for mutual benefit. Encouraging an understanding of healthy relationships and the ability to make good choices is a key strand of positive personal development for all our pupils and students, as well as a key part of safeguarding.

This policy applies to all OHCAT Academies. The policy has been written with reference to Government guidance and law including 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (DfE, 2021), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2022), taking into account the Children's Act 1989 and 2004, the Education Act 1993, 1996 and 2002, and the Children and Social Work Act 2017, as well as the Equalities Act 2010. The policy is informed by a range of guidance including 'Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) for the 21st century' (PSHE Association/Sex Education Forum/Brook, 2017) and 'Sex and Relationships Education in Schools (England)' (Commons Library Briefing Paper, 2021).

There is a separate Relationships & Sex Education Policy for Orchard Hill College, reflecting the adult status of College students. However, both policies are informed by OHC&AT's belief that clear, relevant and positive relationships and sex education contributes greatly to young people's ability to keep themselves safe and negotiate fulfilling relationships into adulthood.

## AIMS

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is an educational entitlement for all children and young people. It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development and sex, sexuality and sexual health. It enhances the self-worth and confidence of each individual and encourages mutually respectful relationships and empathy for others.

As a family of specialist education providers, OHC&AT recognises that children and young people with SEND may be especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. All of our working practices are designed to maximise opportunities for our pupils and students: to learn how to be and keep safe; to communicate and be understood through whichever means of communication is most effective for them; to build healthy and enriching relationships; to maximise their potential and achieve ambitious goals within their local communities. Clear, relevant and inclusive RSE plays a crucial part in safeguarding

children and young people, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities, and as such the delivery of RSE forms part of the universal safeguarding provision detailed in every OHCAT Academy's Safeguarding & Wellbeing Offer. It also complements and underscores other key strands of delivery, including e-safety, anti-bullying and equality and diversity.

This policy sets out how OHCAT complies with the duty to provide Relationships Education (primary), Relationships and Sex Education (secondary) and Health Education (all schools). For the purposes of this policy, the term 'Relationships and Sex Education' is used to encompass any and all of these strands.

## **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION**

The main aims of the Relationships and Sex Education programme within all OHCAT Academies are to give young people the knowledge and understanding to build healthy, enjoyable and positive relationships, and to safeguard and nurture their own physical and mental wellbeing, as they move into adulthood. 'Relationships' should be understood to include friendships, family relationships, relationships in the wider world e.g. work colleagues/strangers, and for secondary school pupils/students, intimate relationships. Pupils/students are encouraged to respect themselves and others, particularly with regard to the importance and understanding of consent. Moral and ethical issues are presented and discussed in order to grow pupils'/students' understanding around issues such as staying safe in the digital age, defining and respecting personal boundaries, recognising unhealthy relationships etc.

Every OHCAT Academy provides a setting in which pupils/students can be offered appropriate teaching, appropriately differentiated, about Relationships and Sex Education. The purpose of RSE is to assist children and young people to prepare for adult life by supporting them through their physical, emotional and moral development and helping them to understand themselves, respect others and form and sustain healthy relationships. RSE is supported by other curriculum strands including science, PE, citizenship etc. and is inclusive of all pupils/students to ensure that they:

- Receive accurate, clear, comprehensive and up to date relationships and sex education.
- Are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.
- Develop positive attitudes to health, relationships and sexuality.

RSE provision can be broadly grouped into three main elements, all of which feed into the development of personal wellbeing and positive relationships:

### **Attitudes and values**

- Understanding the nature and value of stable, loving and mutually respectful relationships of all kinds
- Respect for self and others

- Exploration of moral dilemmas
- Development of critical thinking

### **Personal and social skills**

- Self-confidence, self-esteem and empathy
- Managing emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Skills of choice to manage responsibility

### **Knowledge and understanding**

- Emotions and relationships
- Physical development
- Sexuality, reproduction, sexual health
- Information on local and national contraception and sexual health services
- Reasons for delaying sexual activity
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy
- Keeping physically and emotionally safe
- Information on the law in relation to sexual health and legal rights

Every OHCAT Academy is required to produce a school-specific RSE Procedure which gives details of the subject content, how it is taught, monitored and evaluated, and (where relevant) how parents may request to withdraw their child from sex education within RSE. This procedure must be developed in consultation with pupils/students, families and governors, and regularly reviewed. School-specific procedures also link with each school's local Safeguarding and Wellbeing Offer. Please contact the relevant Academy for copies of these documents.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The OHCAT Board of Trustees will:**

- Challenge and support OHCAT in the regular review of this policy and its implementation

### **The OHC&AT Executive Senior Leadership Team (ESLT) will:**

- Review and update this policy and any related policies/procedures at least every three years, or as required by updates to legislation and national guidance
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of RSE provision, including this policy and local RSE procedures, within OHCAT Academies

### **Academy Principals will:**

- Ensure that a suitable approach to the teaching and evaluation of RSE is in place within their provision, informed by regular consultation with pupils/students, staff and families and compliant with all relevant requirements e.g. equality duties
- Produce and publish a written RSE procedure to sit alongside this policy, detailing the specific approach to RSE provision within the Academy

- Ensure all staff are aware of and abide by this policy, the Academy's RSE Procedure and related documentation

**All staff will:**

- Ensure they are familiar with and adhere to this policy, the Academy's RSE procedure and all other relevant policies and procedures
- Understand the relationship between RSE and safeguarding, including how to manage any safeguarding concerns that may come to light during the course of RSE provision being delivered, and how to maintain appropriate confidentiality

**Partnership with families**

Most of a pupil/student's informal sex and relationship education occurs within the family and every OHCAT Academy's programme will complement and build on this in cooperation with parents and carers.

Parents and carers have the right to withdraw pupils/students from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. Any parent or carer wishing to withdraw a child from the programme must put their request in writing to the Principal. Principals will work with parents/carers and, as appropriate, the pupil/student in question to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. OHCAT Academies will keep a record of any such requests and discussions.

Where sex education is delivered as part of Relationships Education in primary provision, requests to withdraw a pupil/student from this part of the programme will automatically be granted.

Pupils/students who are withdrawn will be accommodated separately and will be set appropriate alternative work to complete.

**POLICY REVIEW DETAILS**

<i>Version:</i>	1.2
<i>Reviewer:</i>	John Prior, Laurie Cornwell
<i>Approval body:</i>	Family Board
<i>Date this version approved:</i>	13 <sup>th</sup> December 2019
<i>Due for review:</i>	Autumn 2022

**RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Anti-Bullying Policy  
Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy  
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

E-Safety Policy  
Mental Capacity and Consent Policy  
OHCAT Academies' Safeguarding & Wellbeing Offers  
Personal and Intimate Care Policy  
Positive Behaviour Policy (Academies)  
Student Mental Wealth, Health & Wellbeing Policy  
Substance Misuse Policy

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

'Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education' (DfE, 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

'Sex and Relationships Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century', PSHE Association/Brook/Sex Education Forum (2014)

[https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/sites/default/files/SRE%20for%20the%2021st%20Century%20-%20FINAL.pdf\\_0.pdf](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/sites/default/files/SRE%20for%20the%2021st%20Century%20-%20FINAL.pdf_0.pdf)

'Sex and Relationship Education in Schools (England)', House of Commons Library (2021)

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn06103/>