



Relationships and Health Education Policy (Mainstream)

Tees Valley Education Trust

Version:	3.2
Next review date:	July 2025
Directorial lead:	Helen Hall
Operational Reviewer:	Keri Beever
Statutory (Y/N):	Y
Published on website (Y/N):	Y
Type of document:	Policy
Approved by:	Trust Board

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INTRODUCTION

Tees Valley Education Trust caters for children from 2-16 years within mainstream and specialist educational settings, who have differing degrees of learning difficulties and associated disabilities. We have children from different cultures and religious backgrounds. This policy is related to our mainstream and SEND unit primary aged children. There is a separate policy covering our SEND special school 3 – 16 year olds due to their complex needs, with some overlap with our more complex SEND Unit children where appropriate.

In line with legal requirements (Education Act 1996, Learning and Skills Act 2000, Statutory Guidance updated in 2021, KCSIE 2024) the TVED Trust Board has overseen the production and development of a Relationships and Health Education Policy which will be made available to parents on our trust and academy websites and has decided to deliver a relationships education programme in addition to that which is part of the statutory national curriculum. The statutory guidance below has guided its development.

[Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Statutory Guidance.pdf](#)

Equal Opportunities

Tees Valley Education Trust encourages respect for all regardless of gender and gender identity, ethnicity, ability, faith, culture, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability, home background or other personal circumstance. Within our provision of relationships, physical health and mental wellbeing education we will ensure that resources used and teaching styles employed reflect and support the diversity of our pupils and wider society. All members of our trusts community will feel safe, valued and respected (see Equality Policy). Throughout the trust there will be consistent challenging of homophobic attitudes, behaviour and language.

We recognise that children at each academy come from a range of family backgrounds, these include: children whose parents are not married; children whose parents have divorced or separated; children in public care; children living with foster parents, grandparents, parents of different ethnicities, disabled parents, same-sex parents and single parents. We will endeavour to ensure that children see these family groupings and relationships represented and affirmed within the relationships education curriculum, academy resources and displays.

In planning the relationships and health education programme we have used learning outcomes from the Statutory Guidance (originally introduced in 2020 health education guidance), and suggestions by Ofsted in their report on SRE (2020). These incorporate the statutory elements of sex education that come within the Science curriculum. We have also given due regard to the SRE guidance issued by the DfE in 2000 and Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century - PHSE Association and Sex Education Forum 2014.

SECTION TWO – RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION

Introduction

This section of the policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of relationships taught in our trust. Relationships education in the primary phase builds the foundations of knowledge, skills and attitudes which help young people to make positive, informed and safe choices about their health and well-being both now and in later life. The trust recognises the contribution that relationships education can make to government health targets.

Review of the policy will be led by the Trust PSHE lead and will be informed by:

- staff and pupil evaluation of the programme;
- any relevant local/national issues;
- relevant changes in the law/good practice guidance;
- the results of parent questionnaires;
- new resources becoming available; and
- pupil needs.

Relationships education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up. At Tees Valley Education Trust will be age and stage-appropriate, building knowledge and life skills over time in a way that prepares pupils for issues they will soon face.

They will likely focus on:

- different types of relationships, including friendships, family relationships and dealing with strangers;
- how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships;
- how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health; and
- healthy relationships and being safe, including safety online.

Aspects of relationships education are cross-curricular. Some aspects are taught in science, PE, and others are taught as part of personal, health, social and economic education (PHSE). All aspects of relationships education links with physical health and mental wellbeing education.

Aims

A comprehensive programme at the primary age range provides accurate information about the body, reproduction and relationships. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and off line. The aims are to:

- equip children with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to manage the responsibilities associated with adult life and to form and maintain positive and fulfilling relationships;
- ensure effective delivery Relationship Education that is age and developmentally appropriate to each child;
- follow the science national curriculum- where appropriate and relevant.
- complement national curriculum subjects, such as citizenship, science, computing and PE

Objectives

- To develop an awareness of the importance of relationships and enable children to practice skills that will help them to build and maintain them.
- To encourage respect for difference and diversity.
- To provide factual information on human reproduction and birth.
- To prepare young people for the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty.
- To ensure that all young people know who can support them and how to access this support.
- To work in partnership with, and support the role of, parents.
- To model positive relationships throughout the academy.
- To actively challenge stereotypes, prejudice and sexual exploitation and give children the skills to critically analyse media messages.
- To give opportunities for pupils to develop and practice decision-making skills with regard to the range of possible consequences.
- To promote, and encourage children to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- To use agreed terminology to discuss body parts throughout the trust.
- To support children to distinguish between the different types of relationships, online content and making positive choices in their access to the online world.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust PSHE lead has the following responsibilities:

- To lead the annual review of the Relationships and Health Education policy.
- To ensure that resources used are relevant and appropriate to the needs of the children.
- To lead on the evaluation of the relationships education policy and programme.
- To ensure that academy leads have the necessary skills, confidence, knowledge, and resources in order to lead and deliver effective relationships education.

Trustees have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that an up-to-date Relationships and Health Education policy is in place and is made available to parents and for inspection.
- To ensure that the Relationships and Health Education policy and curriculum are in line with the DfE relationships education Statutory Guidance 2021.
- To ensure that the policy and programme reflect the trust approach particularly in relation to consultation.
- To keep track of developments with consultations for changes to the Relationship Education Policy 2024.

Teachers have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that they, or anyone working in their classroom to deliver/support relationships education, is doing so in line with the academy's relationships education policy, and other relevant academy policies.
- To contribute to the evaluation of the programme.
- Assessing children's progress against the agreed learning outcomes.
- Communicating the year group content with parents.

Working with Parents/Carers

- We recognise that parents/carers are key partners in our delivery of a comprehensive relationships education programme for pupils at the academy. The relationships education we deliver is designed to support the important role of parents in this area.
- If parents/carers have concerns about any of the content to be covered, we ask that these are addressed to the headteacher.
- Relationships Education is compulsory for all pupils and parents are not able to withdraw their children from it.

- Parents can withdraw consent for Sex Education being delivered to their child/children.
- Sex education is an important part of the transition phase when moving to secondary school enabling the trust to support childrens ongoing emotional and physical development. It is tailored to the age and maturity of the children. Parents are given opportunities to be informed and consulted so that they can support their child and in their decision to allow their child to access this part of their education. This should be shared with academy staff.

Moral and Values Framework

Through the Relationships Education curriculum, both formal and semi-formal, and the modelling of positive relationships throughout the academy and trust, aims to promote and foster morals and values important to the development of Relationships Education. These are as follows:

- Everyone has a right to express their views and be listened to.
- Everyone in the trust should behave in a way that shows care, consideration and respect for themselves, other people and things, and the environment.
- All members of the trust community are equally valued.
- Disputes and disagreements will be resolved peacefully.
- The diversity of individuals, families and relationships will be accepted and celebrated.
- Love, commitment, trust, loyalty and respect are important attributes needed in close relationships.

SECTION THREE – HEALTH EDUCATION

Introduction

At Tees Valley Education, we understand that a child’s health is both their physical health but importantly their mental wellbeing as well, are key to their development.

Mental health is now specifically included as part of the definition of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. At Tees Valley Education, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We have a supportive, inclusive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

Within the Trust, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody’s responsibility and that we all have a role to play.

Our role as a trust is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support. All aspects of health education links with relationships education.

In addition to children’s wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Develop an open culture where it's normal to talk about physical and mental health
- Foster an environment in which everyone feels safe, secure, feels valued and where each person is treated fairly and respectfully
- Ensure all staff know the expectations of promoting positive physical and mental wellbeing
- Promote positive physical and mental health in all staff and pupils, on and offline.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common physical and mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers by enabling access to appropriate support

Objectives:

- Ensure children, parents and staff have a sense of belonging
- Promote self-esteem, self-discipline, good health and positive relationships
- Prepare children for adulthood
- Develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems
- Teach children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
- Help children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it, on and offline.
- Provide opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others understanding how to keep physically healthy
- Promote pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children understand their importance in the world
- Help children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks
- Provide workshops for parents and carers on physical and mental health

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust PSHE Lead, supported by academy Mental Health Leads, has the following responsibilities:

- To lead the annual review of the relating policies.
- To ensure that resources used are relevant and appropriate to the needs of the children.
- To lead on the evaluation of physical health and mental wellbeing policy and programme.
- To ensure that staff have the necessary skills, confidence, knowledge, and resources in order to deliver effective physical health and mental wellbeing education.

The Academy Safeguarding lead and SEND and Inclusion leads has the following responsibilities:

- To lead on advice on mental health working with the academy Mental Health Lead
- To be the first point of contact with mental health services making individual referrals
- To process any safeguarding concerns from staff making individual referrals

Trustees have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that an up-to-date physical health and mental wellbeing policy is in place and is made available to parents and for inspection.
- To ensure that the physical health and mental wellbeing policy is in line with the DfE Statutory Guidance 2021.
- To ensure that the policy and programme reflect a whole academy approach particularly in relation to consultation.

Teachers have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that they, or anyone working in their classroom to deliver/support physical health and mental wellbeing education, is doing so in line with the academy's physical health and mental wellbeing policy, and other relevant academy policies.
- To contribute to the evaluation of the programme.

- Assessing children’s progress against the agreed learning outcomes.
- Communicating the year group content with parents via the newsletters.
- Working with Parents/Carers
- We recognise that parents/carers are key partners in our delivery of a comprehensive physical health and mental wellbeing programme for pupils at the academy. The physical health and mental wellbeing education we deliver is designed to support the important role of parents in this area. To support parents and carers we will be:
 - Organising workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and wellbeing.
 - Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
 - Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
 - Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
 - Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PHSE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
 - If parents/carers have concerns about any of the content to be covered, we ask that these are addressed to the headteacher.

We recognise that parents and carers will also need support in these areas at times, and are committed to offering signposting support, advice and guidance at an appropriate level.

Working With Specialist Services.

As part of our targeted provision the academy will work with other agencies to support children’s emotional health and wellbeing. Your child may be referred to a partner service for additional support.

In planning the physical health and mental wellbeing programme (through PHSE) we have used learning outcomes from the DfE Guidance (updated September 2021). Planning has taken account of the diverse needs of pupils and sessions will be differentiated as appropriate.

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help.

Early identification

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things from getting worse. Changes in patterns may indicate warning signs indicating that a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. Teaching and support staff are responsible for reporting concerns about individual children to designated adults within the school.

Possible warning signs include;

- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Curriculum and delivery

Physical health and mental wellbeing are planned and delivered through PHSE, Physical Education, DT and Science.

Additional Information Relevant To Physical Health And Mental Wellbeing

The Trust employs academy counsellors who support children and families in times of need. Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, all academies have staff with a specific, relevant remit including

- Safeguarding Leads
- SENDCo
- Mental Health Lead
- Lead Carer where required
- Pastoral Lead
- SLT

Physical health and mental wellbeing content for primary schools (DfE updated 13th September 2021) states that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health. Key points the trust has taken into consideration when supporting health education:

- There is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
- How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings and how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness. As well as simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- Consider how isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- How bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- How to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.
- Internet safety and harms - That for most people the internet is an integral part of lives and has many benefits (as set out in the National Curriculum statements for RSE).

Food during the school day

Our aim is to provide pupils with the knowledge to make food choices which support good health and to establish eating patterns and habits which support a healthy lifestyle now and in their future.

Food and drink provided in school should:

- Be nutritious – provide vitamins and minerals
- Be fresh – the use of processed foods should be limited
- Not be high in sugar, fat or salt – see guidance
- Not contain nuts or peanuts
- Not include drinks with added sugar/flavours

EYFS

It is recognised that children in EYFS benefit from a mid-morning snack. Examples of appropriate snack items in EYFS:

- Fresh fruit (dried fruit such as raisins are high in sugar and should be avoided)

- Fresh vegetables
- Plain, savoury rice cakes, crackers and bread sticks
- Toast

KS1

Children in KS1 are offered fruit daily at break time. This is a national scheme as provided by School Fruit and Veg scheme. Fruit is fresh and delivered weekly. Children are offered a range including, apples, pears, bananas, oranges, raisons, tomatoes, carrots and sugar snap peas.

All other year groups

In all other classes snack is not required. Pupils have access to a drink (water) at any time during the school day. Where it is identified that a child has not had breakfast at home and will need more than a piece of fruit, discreet arrangements will be made to provide a healthy breakfast away from their classroom.

Provision For Young Women's Menstruation Needs

Sanitary disposal units are available in the staff and in some pupils' toilets in upper Key Stage 2. All female pupils from Year 5 upwards and their parents are informed that, when necessary, that sanitary protection is available in the event of a pupil starting menstruation when at the academy. Supplies are kept within the academy to deal with emergencies. However, parents can send pupils to the academy with adequate sanitary protection for the day and these can be kept in a private agreed place but the academy can also provide support with products if required. Both male and female pupils are educated about periods through the Relationships Education curriculum to encourage empathy and understanding.

Communication/PECS

For our semi formal children, staff avoid using food as a means of developing communication skills. Where staff feel food is a useful way to develop communication and use of PECS, it should be done so only using fresh fruit and water. This should happen at the start of the morning when fruit and water are available for all pupils. Staff should also explore and utilise other methods of developing communication and PECS use throughout the day.

Lunch time

Pupils should be encouraged to try a range of nutritious foods. It is understood that pupils may prefer the same foods each day and this is acceptable, however, staff should encourage the addition of new foods, particularly vegetables and salad, to attempt to broaden their diet. Only one main meal and one pudding should be offered, regardless of the age or appetite of the pupil. The academy SLT will work with the catering staff to ensure portion sizes are appropriate.

NHS guidance on assessing the fat/sugar/salt content of foods:

	High	Low
Total fat	More than 17.5g of fat per 100g	3g of fat or less per 100g
Saturated fat	More than 5g of saturated fat per 100g	1.5g of saturated fat or less per 100g
Sugar	More than 22.5g of total sugars per 100g	1.5g of total sugars or less per 100g
Salt	More than 1.5g of salt per 100g (or 0.6g sodium)	0.3g of salt or less per 100g (or 0.1g sodium)

SECTION FOUR - THE RELATIONSHIPS & HEALTH EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Relationships & Health Education will be delivered to all pupils at an appropriate level through the following themes:

Relationships Education Provision	Health Education Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring friendships • Respectful relationships • Families and people who care for me • Being safe • Online relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental wellbeing • Internet safety and harms • Physical health and fitness • Healthy Eating • Drugs alcohol and tobacco • Health and prevention • Basic First Aid • Changing adolescent body

Content and delivery will be matched to the age, maturity, understanding and needs of the pupils in each year group. We will use various methods at the beginning of each year to assess children’s current knowledge, understanding and skills in order to ensure that the content of the programme is relevant.

In order to promote common understanding amongst the children, we make use of the correct terminology to discuss sexual body parts in each academy. Whilst we acknowledge that children have different family names for sexual parts we teach and encourage the use of the scientific names. Children need to learn the correct biological/medical names for the genitalia and reproductive organs. Having the right language to describe the private parts of their body – and knowing how to seek help if they are being abused – are vital for safeguarding. The words we will use include: penis, vagina, clitoris, testicles, breasts, nipples. This language is reflected in the resources used to deliver relationships education.

In November 2013, the Office of the Children’s Commissioner (OCC) completed an inquiry into child sexual exploitation (CSE) which has raised awareness of the prevalence of this issue and the urgent need to tackle it. Younger pupils should learn that their body belongs to them and that they can say who has access to it. This is a key element in the trusts approach to safeguarding. Learning to respect boundaries – their own and other people – helps children to understand the need to obtain consent and that everyone has the right to offer or withhold their consent for any activity, sexual or otherwise. (Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century - PSHE Association and Sex Education Forum 2014).

Delivery

Relationship and Health Education should ensure that all children:

- Develop confidence in thinking and communicating about feelings and relationships
- Are aware of parts of the body and describe how their bodies work where appropriate
- Can protect themselves and ask for help and support where appropriate
- Are taught puberty.
- Know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy

- Understand risks and how to make positive choices
- Direct links to on and offline

Adults involved in the teaching of Relationship & Health Education will have had guidance and will feel comfortable in their ability to teach the subject. Any outside agency or speaker will be:

- DBS checked;
- supervised; and
- will have read the PSHE and safeguarding policy.

The formal relationships education programme will be delivered in each year group through PHSE curriculum and where appropriate other trust wide resources are used to supplement teaching and learning, for example Project Evolve and Christopher Winter Sex Education. It will also be delivered through broader topic-based work and through other curriculum subjects, for example Science, PE, DT and Religious Education. There will also be opportunities for more informal teaching through assemblies, circle-time, story-telling and role-play. Children will be encouraged to recognise and apply the knowledge and skills they learn in PSHE to other contexts both within, and outside of, the academy setting.

We recognise that Relationships & Health Education sessions require the use of a range of teaching and learning strategies in order that children have the opportunity to develop skills, explore attitudes and values and acquire knowledge. The range of teaching and learning strategies employed in the delivery of relationships and health education at Tees Valley Education Trust include watching videos, discussion, role-play, quizzes, drama, case studies, matching exercises, drawing, and debates. Individual teachers will ensure that all pupils are able to access the activities to be employed. Appropriately differentiated activities will be provided to match their age and be developmentally appropriate.

Children will be made aware of the intended learning outcomes of each lesson/topic so that they can assess their own development and make progress.

Relationships and Health Education will be delivered by class teachers. We ensure that both male and female pupils receive information on the emotional and physical changes of the onset of puberty and menstruation, covering topics appropriate to their age. This information will be taught in small class groups. In Year 5 and 6 whilst most sessions will be delivered to class groups, some of the sessions on puberty may be delivered to gender groups so that the children have the opportunity to ask questions that they might feel less comfortable asking in a mixed gender group. There may also be occasions when an issue arises that has to be dealt with on an individual basis, in line with the safeguarding policy.

Answering Children's Questions

Children are naturally curious and we believe that if a child asks a question they require an honest and factual answer. This is true of questions asked in all curriculum areas and at other times during the academy day.

All staff in the academy will answer children's questions around relationships issues and health education in line with the following guidance:

- Questions will be answered in a factual manner without any personal bias and with reference to the age and understanding of the child / children.
- If the answer to a question isn't known the class teacher will suggest that the class do some research to find out the appropriate information

- In some situations, staff will sensitively turn the question back on the pupil to establish what they already know, for example “that’s a very interesting question, I wonder why you are asking that” or ask the rest of the class whether they know the answer “Does anyone else know the answer to that question?”
- All staff have considered questions that may be asked and discussed suitable answers.
- If it is felt that it is not appropriate to answer a question in a whole class setting the teacher will explain this sensitively and will give an answer to the child individually at the end or refer the child to their parents.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment on the science elements of Relationships Education will be evident through Science books. Assessment within other areas of the Relationships Education programme can be difficult. However a range of methods, including Personal Development and class floor books, have been produced to record pupils’ responses and development within the different areas. Where appropriate and dependent on the topic, photographs and pupil statements will reinforce these. As part of the child’s annual report, the progress made in science and PSHE is reported to parents.

Assessment of physical health and mental wellbeing will be evident through the assessment of PHSE, Physical Education, DT and Science in curriculum books and electronic learning journals.

Monitoring and evaluation

At the end of each lesson teachers will use a range of informal methods to give pupils the opportunity to reflect on their learning and development.

Throughout each topic a range of methods will be used to assess the extent to which pupils are achieving the intended learning outcomes. Pupils will be assessed on the following three areas: knowledge acquisition; clarification and exploration of attitudes and values; skills development.

Staff development

Staff training on relationships education is co-ordinated by the PSHE/Relationships Education Co-ordinator/ lead in each academy, supported by the trust lead. Training requirements will be identified through the policy review process or through a teacher expressing individual needs to the headteacher. Appropriate training will then be sought to fulfil the needs of the staff member. Anybody who attends training will be required to provide an outline of any relevant information to other staff members via a future staff meeting.

Related Policies & Guidance:

Equality Policy
Safeguarding Policy
TVED Curriculum

KCSIE 2024

DFE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education