

# HEMLINGTON HALL ACADEMY



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## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Policy Version Control	
Policy type	Relationships and Sex Education Policy
Policy prepared by (name and designation)	Miss R. Connors
Last review date	
Description of changes	Difficult conversations script added in as guidance for staff. A consultation for new statutory RSHE guidance was held in May. The new government has committed to reviewing responses however, there has been no firm timescale given or plans for next steps at this point. If and when new updates are released, this policy will be reviewed by RC.
Date of Approval	September 2024
Date released	
Next review date	Autumn 2025

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## Relationships and Health Education Policy

### **1. Background**

The UK government has passed The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, which made Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. These Regulations also made Health Education compulsory in all schools except Independent Schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

The Department for Education also published guidance as to the content of the Relationship Education and Health Education. The effect of this legislation is that from September 2020, all state-funded primary schools will have to deliver two new subjects “Relationships Education” and “Health Education”. These subjects should sit within a wider framework of Personal, Social, Health Education, which has been described by the Chief Medical Officer as a bridge between health and education <sup>1, 2</sup>.

High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society.

Although these are important educational subjects in their own right, research evidence <sup>(3-6)</sup> suggests that learning about relationships and health promotes well-being and can also improve academic attainment.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help children and young people develop knowledge and attributes to support their own, and others’, well-being and attainment and help them to become successful, and happy adults, who make a meaningful contribution to society.

Primary Schools also can decide whether they also teach ‘Sex Education’ in addition to that already being addressed as part of the National Curriculum, Science.

### **2. Aims of the PSHE Relationships and Health Education**

The aim of relationships education at Hemlington Hall Academy is to help pupils develop self-respect, confidence and empathy. Pupils will learn about what makes healthy relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in a way that is age appropriate and sensitive to their needs. This will include online relationships, and

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how to seek help if they feel unsafe. Teaching will respect the diversity of families in our community.

Relationships education is not about sexual relationships. The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about physical and emotional changes, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions.

Children's learning about Relationships Education, is mutually supportive of, and contributes to learning about Health Education, which includes physical health and mental well-being. Physical health and mental well-being are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental well-being.

The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental well-being is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and well-being, promote pupils' ability to regulate their emotions and to reduce stigma attached to mental health issues.

Children's learning in Relationships Education and Health Education will support the wider work of the school in helping to foster pupil well-being, develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. We consider:

- How relationships education relates to the HHA ethos and values.
- Age appropriate, National curriculum guidance on the teaching of sex education
- Parents right to withdraw children, and ensure we keep parents informed in advance of teaching these aspects of the Curriculum

### **3. Policy development**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents as required by the Department for Education in their Statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education<sup>7</sup> which is mandatory from September 2020.

We are committed to on-going consultation with families and stakeholders throughout the evolution of our school's relationships education programme. The process has involved the following steps:

- Review – a working group pulled together all relevant information including national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation – staff had the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.

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- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to work with us on policy, look at examples of resources and make recommendations.
  - Pupil consultation – we spoke to pupils about the skills they would like to learn
  - Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

The DfE guidelines state that schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy and that the policy should reflect the view of teachers and pupils.

All schools are aware that that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Relationships Education and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils and we will ensure high quality teaching, in line with the SEND code of practice that is differentiated and personalised to ensure accessibility.

Our Relationships Education and Health Education Policy will be published on our website and a paper copy can be obtained from the school office (free of charge).

## **4. Statutory Requirements**

Relationships education is compulsory in primary schools from September 2020, so all pupils must take part in these lessons. In developing our policy, we consulted with Parents and other stakeholders, which DfE guidance<sup>9</sup> suggests should be a process, to seek opinions about particular activities, to better understand their views and take them into account when making final decisions. The DfE Guidance is equally clear that schools ultimately make the final decisions and engagement does not amount to a parental veto.

Sex education is not compulsory for primary schools. Pupils will learn about puberty and the changing adolescent body as part of Health Education after year 4, as part of science/health education lessons in Years 5 and 6.

Other aspects of sex education will not be covered unless safeguarding concerns determine otherwise. Parents will be informed in advance if that happens.

Health Education is also statutory and focuses on learning about the characteristics of good physical health and mental well-being and the relationship between good physical health and good mental well-being.

## **5. Links to other policies and curriculum areas**

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Much of the sex and relationship education takes place within PSHE lessons, however, RSE and Health Education complement several national curriculum subjects.

Teachers generally deliver the PSHE curriculum with support from professionals where appropriate. School staff are usually the best people to work with the pupils on many of the RSE topics as they are aware of each pupil's individual circumstances. RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also taught as part of National Curriculum Science. The school PSHE Programme and Science National Curriculum are taught in every year group from year 1 onwards.

## **5.1 National Curriculum for Science**

At Key Stages 1 and 2, the national curriculum for science includes teaching about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. This remains statutory.

## **5.2 National Curriculum for Computing**

Our curriculum for computing aims to ensure that all pupils can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including logic, algorithms and data representation. It also covers e-safety, with progression in the content to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older. This includes how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, what the signs of grooming (including online) are and where to go for help and support.

## **5.3 National Curriculum for Physical Education**

Our PE curriculum aims to ensure that pupils develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and activities and lead healthy, active lives.

## **5.4 Character Education**

Throughout the school, we follow, as far as reasonably possible, the (non-statutory) Framework Guidance on Character Education from the Department for Education<sup>9</sup>.

## **5.5 Other Policies**

Our policies comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149 of the Equality Act).

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The content of Relationships Education is supported by our Anti-Bullying, Equality and Diversity Trust, and Child Protection & Safeguarding policies.

We provide free sanitary products to girls in school on request.

Health Education links to these and also our Computing and PE policies.

These policies should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2023 (statutory guidance)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)

## **6. Delivery of Relationships Education**

Relationships education will be inclusive for all pupils, sensitive to all family and faith backgrounds and pupils' own identities. It will be respectful of all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics are age,

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disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

## *Ethnic, Cultural and Religious Groups*

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic, cultural and religious groups. We encourage parents /carers to discuss any concerns with Mrs Edmenson. Before lessons which some groups may want to discuss, the content is highlighted in parental newsletters to allow for an opportunity of discussion and clarification.

## *Pupils with Special Needs*

We will ensure that all pupils receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary. Children with significant SEND needs are expected to understand the concepts of RSE at a 'stage appropriate' level and will be supported by specialist staff when appropriate.

## *Sexual Identity, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation*

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity and answer appropriate questions and offer support. We aim to deliver a fully inclusive curriculum, underpinned by an understanding of healthy relationships – no matter who that relationship is with. Pupils, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them. Such issues often occur outside of PSHCE lesson time, e.g. from texts children are reading or TV they may discuss. Teachers are aware that 'incidental' teaching is key in all aspects of RSE.

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported to develop the following skills as appropriate to their age:

- Communication skills
- Forming positive relationships including self-respect as well as respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness and managing conflict and difficult emotions

These skills are taught within the context of family life and friendships, in an age appropriate way. The school environment will reflect, value and celebrate the diversity of friendships and relationships. Lessons will be delivered by school staff.



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Children will sometimes ask questions pertaining to relationships, sex or sexuality that go beyond what is set out in the curriculum. If questions go unanswered by school staff, children may turn to inappropriate sources of information including the internet. We will answer any questions in a way that is sensitive to children's family and faith backgrounds, appropriate to their age and understanding, and consistent with the relationships education policy and scheme of work. This may necessitate discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups, as not every child in a class will have the same type of questions. We may contact parents if we need guidance about a child's needs or if we think a child would benefit from their parents' input around a particular issue.

Importantly, each class of children will be reviewed for maturity and some of the learning opportunities will be based on children's questions. Detailing specific learning intentions allows teachers licence to answer these questions should they arise.

The Department for Education (DfE) has set out guidance on what children must learn in Relationships Education by the end of Year 6, under a series of themes. The statutory content as written by the DfE is set out below. Some themes will recur throughout school while others will be taught in the most appropriate years.

## **6.1 Families and people who care for me**

- Families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- 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.
- Others' families, both 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## **6.2 Caring friendships**



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- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- Characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- Healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- 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.

## **6.3 Respectful relationships**

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## **6.4 Online relationships**

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- People sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
  - 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.
  - 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.

## **6.5 Being safe**

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- 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.
- 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.
- The NSPCC's PANTS awareness course will be delivered each year by every class. The correct terms for private parts will be taught from Year 1 onwards.

Religious education links to relationships education by looking at family, values and morals, and the celebration of marriage in different traditions.

## **7. Delivery of Health education**

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Health Education is statutory in state funded schools from September 2020, includes teaching on feelings as they relate to mental well-being, the importance of friends and family, the impact of bullying, and how children can seek help if they have worries. It also requires schools to teach about the emotional and physical changes that take place during puberty.

The Department for Education (DfE) has set out guidance on what children must learn in Health Education by the end of Year 6, under a series of themes. The statutory content as written by the DfE is set out below. Some themes will recur throughout school while others will be taught in the most appropriate years.

## **7.1 Mental well-being**

- Mental well-being is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- That 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.
- 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 well-being and happiness.
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental well-being.
- Where and 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 well-being 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.

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## 7.2 Internet safety and harms

- For most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- The benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical well-being.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.
- That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- What online grooming is, how to recognise it and report it.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

## 7.3 Physical health and fitness

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).
- How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

## 7.4 Healthy eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.

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- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

## **7.5 Drugs, alcohol and tobacco**

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

## **7.6 Health and prevention**

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
- The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.

## **7.7 Basic first aid**

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- Concepts of basic first-aid, for example, dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

## **7.8 Changing adolescent body**

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- About menstrual well-being including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

### **8.1 The governing board**

The governing board will approve the relationships education policy and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

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As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, governors will also ensure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

HHA supports girls at the time of menstruation. Designated pupil toilets are provided with sanitary bins and free products as required.

## **8.2 The head teacher**

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that relationships education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education lessons, if applicable.

## **8.3 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering relationships in a sensitive way, taking account of pupils' family and faith backgrounds
- Modelling positive attitudes to relationships education, and health education, as with any other subject
- Monitoring children's learning in order to ensure they make progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Ensuring that the learning is accessible to pupils with SEND.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory sex education lessons, if applicable.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching relationships education. Staff who have concerns about teaching this subject are encouraged to seek support.

## **8.4 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in relationships education lessons and treat others with respect and sensitivity, as we expect all the time in school.

## **9. Parents' right to withdraw their children from lessons**

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Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education lessons as detailed in paragraph 2 and taught as part of the Relationships Education or PSHE curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the head teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's file so that parents' wishes are on record. The head teacher will automatically grant the request to withdraw a pupil the sex education and alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Primary schools are required to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum and there continues to be no right to withdraw from these lessons.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

When engaging in difficult conversations, staff can use the script below:

*You have told me...*

*Our school values include... kindness and respect for all.*

*We are a fully inclusive school.*

*What we teach is agreed across our Trust and is set by the government.*

*If you would like to talk more about this, I can arrange for a chat with...*

## **10. Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of relationships education as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The head teacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching Relationships and Health Education.

Whilst external visitors are used to enhance the delivery of Relationships Education and Health Education, any sessions delivered by outside visitors will be consistent with our policy on relationships education.

Staff will receive general training in the PSHE programme. Staff will receive additional updated training with regard to teaching Sex Education in addition to Relationships Education.

## **11. Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements**



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The delivery of Relationships Education and Health Education, is monitored by SLT regularly through learning walks, pupil and staff interviews.

Pupils' development in Relationships Education, and Health Education, is monitored by class teachers as part of our MAT trust assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Ruth Connors, annually. At every review, the policy will be scrutinized and ratified by the governing board.

## 12. References

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<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14635240.2015.1111770>
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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-link-between-pupil-health-and-wellbeing-and-attainment>
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<https://www.probonoeconomics.com/sites/default/files/files/PSHE%20Evidence%20Review%202017.PDF>
- 5 A curriculum for life: The case for statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education (2017) The PSHE Association <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/system/files/Curriculum%20for%20life%20December%202017%2012.06%2019%20Dec.pdf>
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Research

Report

DfE

RR-253

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/219638/DFE-RR253.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219638/DFE-RR253.pdf)

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>
- 8 Parental Engagement on Relationships Education Department for Education 2019  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engaging-parents-with-relationships-education-policy>
- 9 Framework Guidance on Character Education from the Department for Education (2019)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/849654/Character Education Framework Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/849654/Character_Education_Framework_Guidance.pdf)
- 10 The Equality Act 2010 and Schools Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities Department for Education May 2014  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315587/Equality Act Advice Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)