



**Aston Community
Education Trust**

Aston Academy RSHE & PSHE Policy

DATE: September 2025

POLICY LEAD: Principal

APPROVED BY: LGB



Excellence



Equity



Empowerment



Esteem

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Level	<i>Academy / Secondary</i>	
Approved By	<i>LGB</i>	
Approval Date		
This policy remains valid until it is reviewed and replaced; it does not expire by date alone. Policies are reviewed annually, or sooner if required by statutory or legislative changes, in line with best practice		
Policy Lead/ Author	<i>Principal/S Rhodes</i>	
VERSION NUMBER	DATE ISSUED	UPDATED INFORMATION
V1	November 2023	2-Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Statutory aspects of RSE strand updated The Right to Withdraw from Sex Education updated 3-Health Education updated 5-Curriculum Planning updated 6-Methods of delivery updated 7-Principles of delivery updated 8-Parental/Carer involvement updated
V2	October 2024	Minor amendment to Section 1 Added References Section on sexual harassment and how we respond RSE – section on pornography RSE – section on harmful stereotypes
V3	September 2025	Reviewed with no changes



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Mission Statement

At Aston Academy we are committed to providing high quality learning and teaching, enabling everyone to reach their full potential, whatever their age, ability, gender or ethnicity.

We believe that every person is unique and we work together in an inclusive environment of mutual respect and consideration, valuing everyone’s contribution.

Through our partnership with the local and wider community we aim to support our young people in successfully taking their place in society.

With your commitment we will make a difference.

References:

- DfE – Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, Statutory guidance (2019)
- PSHE Association – Programme of Study for PSHE Education (2020)
- OFSTED – ‘Not yet good enough: personal, social, health and economic education in schools’ (2013)
- DfE – PSHE Education guidance (2013)
- DfE - Citizenship programmes of study (Statutory guidance) (2013)
- DfE Guidance - Promoting Fundamental British Values through SMSC (2014)
- DfE – Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers (2018)
- CDI Framework for Careers, employability and Enterprise Education (2015)
- D2N2 Employability Framework (2015)
- DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools (2012)
- OFSTED - Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges 2021

1. Statement of intent

Our PSHE curriculum aims to give students the knowledge and skills required to keep themselves healthy and safe and to prepare them for work and life in modern Britain. Every ACET member of teaching staff plays a vital role in ensuring our students not only leave school with the attributes and skills needed to manage their lives in the future, but also in promoting their immediate well-being. PSHE is central to the curriculum because healthy and happy students are much more likely to thrive in other areas of academy life.

Over time, we want our students to develop the interpersonal skills and confidence they will need to form positive relationships in a range of different social settings. We want them to be able to: recognise what is right and wrong, identify risks or warning signs, resist pressures and make informed decisions based on objective, impartial information. We also want our students to know their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the UK, to respect people of different cultural and faith backgrounds, to value democracy and the rule of law and take part in all the opportunities society has to offer.

Students will be encouraged to develop their interests and talents and receive quality guidance, information and support to enable them to fulfil their future aspirations. Our PSHE curriculum, therefore, has a vital role to play in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of our students.

The teaching of PSHE provides an excellent opportunity to stimulate and engage students through creative learning activities. The progress our students make will be assessed every lesson using a range of strategies alongside teacher questioning, such as the completion of creative learning tasks and self-evaluation starters and plenaries. The quality of our PSHE provision will also be monitored and evaluated via discussions with HOFs, student voice, evidence within schemes of work, learning walks to evaluate the effective implementation of the PSHE curriculum in the classroom. The results from the annual Lifestyle Survey will also enable us to assess the impact of PSHE on student behaviours and habits, to inform future planning.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) regulations 2019 make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. (DfE)

RSE Sexual harassment and abuse in schools including online

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) regulations 2019 make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. (DfE) Following the guidance and review on sexual abuse in schools and colleges, we will ensure that the RSHE curriculum is carefully sequenced based on the statutory guidance. This includes the teaching about 'child on child' sexual harassment and sexual violence including online. We encourage students to discuss the topics, which include sexual harassment, abuse, consent, healthy and unhealthy relationships, domestic violence, pornography, and online safety (sexting and sending inappropriate images). It also important that we keep in mind that children can also be victim of domestic abuse simply by being a witness. Children can also be victims in their own relationships, so this aspect of the curriculum is taught sensitively. We also explain to students where they can seek support from DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and outside agencies such as NSPCC.

2. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

The RSE strand of our PSHE curriculum addresses the Department of Education objective: 'to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds'

- The PSHE curriculum reflects the Department of Education’s statutory RSE programme by setting out how the key topics of families, respectful relationships, online and the media, being safe and intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health, will be delivered.
- All statutory aspects of RSE strand are centrally planned and resourced by specialist teaching staff and delivered through the form period programme.
- Our PSHE curriculum ensures that the RSE strand is implemented effectively by ensuring knowledge and skills are re-visited and learning is cumulative and age appropriate.
- Sex education should seek to challenge harmful gender stereotypes among children and address contexts of normalisation of aggressive behaviours and harassment. There is promising evidence on the importance of sex and relationships education in promoting active bystander behaviours, both among pupils and teachers, to stand up against negative behaviours they may witness
- Evidence has shown that pornography can contribute to young people normalising harmful behaviours and abusive cultures, as well as developing unhealthy expectations about their sexual encounters. The curriculum includes teaching on how to critically approach pornographic content and encourage a holistic view on the industry, including understanding the industry and the behaviours it encourages.
- RSHE promotes understanding of a diverse range of identities and characteristics, promote sensitive behaviour towards others, and develop a shared understanding of respect. All aspects of diversity are important here, but one to highlight is LGBTQ+ inclusivity. RSE that is LGBTQ+ inclusive can motivate students and staff to be ready to intervene if they witness discrimination or violence, making the whole environment safer and more comfortable for everyone. It is important to go beyond diversity based on protected characteristics to also include other aspects of diversity, particularly body diversity.

How we intend to respond / have responded to sexual harassment and abuse:

We are to assume that sexual harassment between students takes place in the academy and so the following steps are used to address this:

Students should always report any circumstances where they do not feel safe. Where they are treated inappropriately by other students or made to feel uncomfortable in any way. We encourage students to report this to any member of staff.

Once this has been reported students can be reassured that they will be listened to and treated with respect. Their report will be taken seriously.

Student discussions will be logged and acted upon immediately - which may mean involvement of external support Students should understand that their safety in the academy is paramount

Staff will be provided with high quality safeguarding training and regular CPD on sensitive sexual harassment topics Staff and leaders will challenge any inappropriate language, slurs or actions, if witnessed or reported in the academy and implement our behaviour policy fully

Logs of sexual harassment will be monitored closely and renewed strategies to address any areas of concern will be implemented, with the support of external agencies if needed.

Zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

The academy has developed ‘Acceptance without Exception’ to ensure that all students are treated equally and have a safe space to go to should they need support.

The Right to Withdraw from Sex Education:

Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Following any request for withdrawal, the Principal/Vice Principal will discuss the request with the parent/carer and, as appropriate, the student to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. They will also highlight the benefits of accessing this important education as well as any detrimental effects that withdrawal may have on the child. A full record will be kept of all such requests and subsequent discussions.

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the Academy will respect the parent/carer's request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns sixteen (for example, if a child turns 16 in September of Y11 and they want to study RSE, parents will only be able to withdraw them before Y10). After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the Academy will decide to provide the child with sex education.

With regard to students with SEND, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Principal may need to take a student's specific needs into account when making the decision about withdrawal.

If a student is withdrawn from sex education, the Academy will ensure that the student receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

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

3. Health Education

The Health Education strand of our PSHE curriculum aims to help students recognise changes to their emotions and feelings, thereby supporting them to develop a level of emotional literacy so they learn, appropriately and accurately, to express their feelings, health and emotions through language.

Our PSHE curriculum reflects the Department of Education objective that students understand the steps that can be taken to support their own health and wellbeing, including the benefits of physical activity, online safety, sufficient sleep, healthy diet and nutrition.

The Health Education curriculum ensures full implementation of the statutory Health Education programme by including the key topics: mental well-being, internet safety and harms, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs alcohol and tobacco, health and prevention, basic first aid and changing adolescent body.

4. Living in the Wider World

This third strand is based on the PSHE Association's 'Programme of Study' and the 'Gatsby' benchmarks for careers provision. It includes a focus on personal development through topics such as: learning skills, choices and pathways, work and career, employment rights and responsibilities, financial choices and media literacy. The intent of this aspect of the PSHE curriculum is outlined in the bullet points below.

- To develop students' literacy and confidence when it comes to understanding the labour market and future study opportunities so they can make well-informed realistic decisions about learning and work.
- To help students to become skilled users of careers information helping them to manage subsequent transitions after they have left ACET.
- To assist young people so that they develop the knowledge and skills they need to make decisions, manage transitions in learning and move into work. The curriculum encourages students to reflect on their strengths, interests, qualities and values and make and implement plans.
- To develop an understanding of rights and responsibilities in the workplace and the advantages and disadvantages of different contractual terms.
- To ensure our young people understand the different criteria that form part of a successful application and enable them to develop skills in applying for posts including writing a CV and preparing for an interview.
- To provide our learners with the opportunity to speak to employers and employees
- To develop an understanding of successful ways to manage money, including the importance of budgeting, assessing the risks involved in financial decision-making and recognising external influence on the decisions we make with our money

- The ‘living in the wider world’ theme also encompasses Citizenship education. The DfE states that Citizenship education ‘...[should] provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society’
- The PSHE curriculum fulfils the aims set out in the 2013 DfE statutory Citizenship programmes for Key Stage Three and Four. The areas included in the curriculum are outlined in the bullet points below.
- To help students to understand the context in which they live, at a local, national, and global level. This includes understanding of political systems and processes, environmental issues, and an appreciation of different cultures.
- To ensure students develop an understanding of ‘British’ values, human rights and their responsibilities as British and global citizens.
- To ensure students are aware of opportunities to participate in society, including voluntary work and political processes.
- To enable students to participate in Academy life as active citizens.
- To equip students with the skills to participate in adult life as active citizens.
- To prepare students for life in a multi-cultural society.

5. Curriculum Planning

The content of the ACET PSHE curriculum is based on national frameworks (National Curriculum for citizenship, DfE PSHE statutory guidance (2020), PSHE Association programme of study (2020), and Gatsby benchmarks for careers provision. It is also responsive to local circumstances by using research carried out in school such as student voice and lifestyle surveys and data from partner agencies (for example local trends in anti-social behaviour reported by the police).

The schemes of work and PSHE programmes are reviewed annually and take account of local trends, staff and student feedback. Half termly curriculum overviews are available on the website along with a curriculum plan for each year group (Academy Curriculum – PSHE).

Teachers may explicitly mention violence or abuse as interventions may include watching informative films or useful resources, but teaching approaches should be based on exploration and development, and avoid practices based on fear or self-blame. Culturally responsive teaching should acknowledge the circumstances of pupils and peers and how children and young people grow as active members of the community.

6. Methods of delivery

Students access our PSHE curriculum as follows:

- PSHE is exclusively delivered by the Form Tutor across 3 x 30-minute Tutor sessions per week. Material and resources are compliant with national guidelines and sourced/provided by specialist staff.
- The Assembly Programme offers associated complementary enhancement or an opportunity to extend student experience by inviting key speakers; representing local or regional partnerships.
- Y7 PSHE topics include Healthy lifestyles, Self-esteem and confidence, European Day of Languages, Puberty and growing up, relationships, friendships and conflict management, human rights, online bullying and harassment, attitudes to mental health, healthy coping strategies and careers advice.
- Y8 PSHE topics include drugs education, inappropriate sexualised behaviours, relationships and consent, grooming, financial exploitation, attitudes and skills valued by employers, the Equality Act, hate crimes, being an ally and neurodiversity.
- Y9 PSHE topics include drugs and their effects, alcohol and binge-drinking, vaping, sexual consent, HIV and AIDS, contraception, making good choices at KS4, routes into work (apprenticeships, university, college and Aston Post-16 provision), gangs, county lines, understanding and preventing extremism, democracy
- Y10 PSHE topics include depression, stress, anxiety, healthy and unhealthy coping strategies, energy drinks and sleep, recognising signs of control violence and harassment, marriage and honour-based abuse, attitudes to

women, ideas of masculinity, financial exploitation, parenthood and teenage pregnancy, abortion, preparation for Work Experience, challenging stereotypes in career pathways, terrorism, extremism and radicalisation.

- Y11 PSHE topics include domestic abusive, coercive control, safe space, ground rules & healthy relationships, writing a personal statement, writing a CV, preparing for interview, contraception, fertility, parenthood, abortion, contraception (re-visited), adoption and fostering, change, loss & grief, male and female cancers, exam preparation.

7. Principles of delivery

The PSHE programme should be accessible and relevant to all students and take an inclusive approach in relation to religious beliefs, sexuality, gender, disability and race. Under the Equality Act 2010, racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia will not be tolerated anywhere in the Academy, and the PSHE programme supports students to conduct themselves positively and respectfully.

The RSE and mental health aspects of the curriculum are delivered by our tutors who, although not necessarily subject specialists, are experienced in effectively addressing sensitive topics and have received training and/or have had the opportunity to share best practice with other professionals.

Form tutors are well placed to understand the needs of the students in their group, be sensitive to any issues that may be linked to personal development topics and to follow up any concerns raised – either by bringing them to the quick attention of Pastoral Teams or by logging them on our monitoring system: CPOMs. Tutors have a knowledge of the academic attainment of their tutees, their attendance and behaviour records, and can tailor their delivery of topics that focus on careers education appropriately. Tutors can refer any questions they are unable to answer to the PSHE co-ordinator.

The Academy careers advisor works on organising events such as employment fayres, HE workshops and visits to training providers and further/higher education fayres. He also encourages students to book sessions with him to discuss future pathways and aspirations, to provide them with professional expertise and support. This work complements the 'living in the wider world' schemes of work delivered in tutor time.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The process involved the following steps:

Review - relevant information supplied by national and local guidance and surveys

Staff consultation - all staff were given opportunity to look at the policy and suggest recommendations.

This included a bespoke consultation with governor in charge of personal development.

The policy was shared with parents/ carers and interested parties who were invited to make suggestions about the policy

Students were consulted about the content and how it should be delivered - the Student Leadership Team played were consulted and were given opportunity to offer feedback

Ratification - the policy was shared with the governing body

The impact of the curriculum will be evaluated each year

Any changes to the policy will be highlighted and shared with governors and parents /carers

If necessary, clear effective plans will be implemented to address gaps

8. Parental/Carer involvement

We recognise that parental influence and support is key in helping students to prepare for adult life and achieve their potential. Good communication with parents/carers is also vital in gaining their confidence in the PSHE curriculum. This is achieved by ensuring they understand the content and purpose of the curriculum. A detailed description of forthcoming teaching topics for the next half term is posted on the academy website and the end of each half term. Parents and carers can also find an overview of the topics students in each year group will cover

in the academic year. A Parent/Carer consultation took place in 2021-22 where parents/carers were invited to an online meeting if they wanted to discuss the new statutory RSHE curriculum.

9. Management and evaluation

Tutor and pupil voice surveys are carried out on a regular basis to check learning outcomes and inform the development of the PSHE programme. Research conducted by external agencies such as the 'lifestyle survey' by Rotherham council is discussed and the findings shared with school leaders to inform the planning and adaption of the PSHE curriculum. Delivery of the PSHE curriculum is monitored and evaluated by PSHE specialist leaders who are responsible for ensuring that different faculties are effectively planning and delivering the curriculum. Students are also pivotal to the RSHE curriculum, they are involved with the planning and delivery of the key concepts; to enable topics to be taught effectively and inclusively. Students are consulted throughout the academic year.

10. Differentiation

The taught PSHE programme is designed to ensure all students have a broad and balanced education to prepare them for adult life. It is recognised that some groups of students have needs for additional input, or early intervention. Such students may be identified as individuals or groups to receive targeted intervention, to be delivered by school staff or outside agencies.

For SEND learners, teaching of RSE and Health Education will be differentiated but the content will remain the same. If learners with SEND are struggling to access the learning, additional support will be provided through targeted intervention, small group work or one to one provision with support staff.

Provision is made for all students to access the PSHE curriculum.