

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Approved by: Christopher Kenny

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Last reviewed on: 15/10/2024

Next review due by: 15/10/2025

Previous reviews

01 Sept 2023

RATIONALE AND ETHOS

This policy covers our Devonpathways approach to the teaching of Sex and relationship education.

DevonPathways develop positive professional relationships with mentees working through Social and Emotional needs and SEN. Within sessions SRE may become an area of discussion and work.

DevonPathways core work is developing positive professional relationships with peers and adults in different social settings such as the classroom.

RSE is not about encouraging teenagers to become sexually active nor is it about promoting any lifestyle of relationship choice. RSE is about providing young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make safe, healthy and informed relationship choices as young people and in the future as adults. We believe in empowering young people to understand their bodies, to reflect on their relationship values and to be able to openly discuss relationships and sex. We believe that this approach will reduce the risk of unhealthy and abusive relationships.

DevonPathways staff will

- Be age appropriate and differentiated to the needs of ALL young people in our care.
- Present information in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner.
- Encourage the development of social skills and strategies, which will reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse.
- Be fully inclusive of all genders, sexual orientations and all types of families (LGBT inclusive)
- Develop a clear understanding of the importance of consent; how to give, withdraw, ask for and recognise consent.
- Reinforce the importance of loving relationships, rooted in mutual respect.
- Explore the skills needed for effective parenting and how to assess one's readiness to be a parent.
- Represent all types of families and to explore the different methods for starting a family.
- Ensure that BAME, LGBT and people with disabilities are positively represented in our curriculum.
- Ensure young people can identify the qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Allow young people to examine the physical and emotional implications of sexual behaviour and to explore the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- Make young people aware of how and where to seek help if they are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship.
- Prepare young people for the journey from adolescence to adulthood.
- Provide young people with a safe environment to learn about sexual orientation and gender identity, reinforcing the importance of mutual respect and tackling LGBT misconceptions, homophobia, transphobia, bi-phobia and gender stereotypes.
- Ensure that young people have a clear understanding of sexual and reproductive biology, including knowledge of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Ensure young people understand the different risks associated with various types of sexual activity and understand how to engage in safe sexual activity by exploring a range of contraception.
- Place paramount importance on online safety and the risks of using social media and the internet for sexual purposes.
- Develop young people' understanding of the dangers of pornographic material.

1 LEGISLATION (STATUTORY REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE)

From September 2020 the guidance document 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE): statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers' will become statutory. This document clearly sets out the curriculum content that secondary schools must deliver on RSE and Health Education. DevonPathways is not responsible for the delivery of the content (unless working with EOTAS students), but will be mindful when working with young people. This document contains information on what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools must comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE). Unless otherwise specified, 'school' means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units. See appendix A for further information on curriculum content.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781150/Draft_guidance_Relationships_Education;Relationships_and_Sex_Education;RSEand_Health_Education2.pdf

The RSE policy supports/complements the following policies:

- a. Child protection and Safeguarding Policy
- b. Anti-Bullying Policy
- c. Equal opportunities and diversity policy
- d. Behaviour policy

Documents that inform DevonPathways RSE policy include:

- e. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2020)
- f. Education Act (1996)
- g. Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- h. Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- i. Equality Act (2010),
- j. Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- k. Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- l. Children and Social Work Act (2017)

RSE may be delivered in sessions and may include interactive activities, including role play, programs, student led research, developing understanding of term terms through regular quizzes.

Mentors will differentiate content to ensure that all learners can access and benefit from the work. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of social and communication skills, this often allows students with literacy needs to be successful through verbal input.

Young people are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress by creating a mind map. Young people may be asked to complete a quiz to assess their understanding of the key term's vocabulary for that unit, depending on their ability to access formalized learning content.

2 SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

DevonPathways will seek guidance from the referring body on content and how this content may be delivered where able. There may be times when content is raised by young people that mentors feel needs immediate answers. This policies rationale and ethos will guide answers and any such conversations will be logged in session reports or if the mentor feels appropriate reported to their line manager to pass onto the referring body. This does not take precedence over any safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding policy and procedures take precedence.

DevonPathways will ensure a safe learning environment with special emphasis on respect and listening. Distancing techniques such as case studies and examples, are used to limit the distress that may be caused to young people who are personally affected by the topics covered.

Young people' questions will be answered by DevonPathways mentors in a sensitive and honest manner, where the mentor feels unable to answer the question, they will refer the question to other staff of their line manager.

During Relationships & Sex Education lessons (and at other times) controversial topics may arise. The judgement of mentors will decide whether the subjects are suitable for discussion. Mentors will try to answer young people' questions honestly, sensitively and in such a way that take the context into account. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of the mentor must come into play.

DevonPathways will use the PSHE Association Programme of study ([PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education \(Key stages 1–5\), Jan 2020.pdf \(hubspotusercontent00.net\)](#) and programme builder to develop learning opportunities for our learners. If specified in the learning targets session experiences can be referenced to the programme of study and Which element of the programme of study has been covered. For EOTAS students' programmes of study can be developed.

3 SAFEGUARDING

DevonPathways staff are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Mentors will consult with the designated safeguarding lead.

4 ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

Parents and referring bodies are informed about the policy through the DevonPathways website.

We work closely with referring bodies to ensure that they are fully aware of what is being taught and provide additional resources and support.

We will notify referring bodies when Relationships and Sex education has been taught through session reports.

DevonPathways mentors will research what their mentees wish to gain form the programme through formal questionnaires and/or informally in conversations.

Right to withdraw

Parents' have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, DevonPathways

will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing addressed to the student's main school setting which will be passed to DevonPathways. If students are EOTAS communication by parents will be through DCC or directly to DevonPathways. If directly with DevonPathways then information will be shared with DCC referral body

For EOTAS students' Parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships and Sex Education, because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

Support for children who are withdrawn from the programme.

If a parent or carer requests that their child be removed from 'sex education', referring bodies will inform DevonPathways. DevonPathways will provide support by ensuring the child understands that if they have questions, they may still speak with their mentor directly. DevonPathways will also provide other PSHE education work on the themes of positive social relationships and managing change.

