



Dacorum Education
Support Centre

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

DESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, to feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other strengths and differences.

OUR VISION

To provide an outstanding education that supports the individual needs of all our learners, offering rich learning experiences with therapeutic care to ensure the best outcomes. To enable all our learners to flourish and grow in all aspects of their development, so that they are equipped with the competencies and confidence to engage fully and enjoy life. To eliminate the need for exclusions in primary and secondary schools in our locality by providing pro-active and preventative support which builds the capacity of mainstream schools to meet the needs of at-risk learners.

RATIONALE

Relationship and sex education (RSE) is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development and the understanding of the importance of loving and caring relationships. RSE is recognised as a vital part of a child's education, ensuring they are ready for the social and emotional challenges of growing up.

TEACHING and LEARNING

At DESC 'Relationship Education' **underpins** all that we do. Our whole philosophy is based on relationships and the need to support our learners into healthy interdependence until they are ready to transition to healthy independence. Across the organisation we model positive relationships and we are the **intervention**. All of our systems and strategies are reliant on the quality of the relationship through which everything is delivered. A vast majority of our learners have unhealthy ways of relating with others and the world. We have a significant proportion of learners with insecure attachment styles and this is their 'lens' for making sense of the world around them. It is the safe and healthy relationships that we promote and model continuously that provide the vehicles of repair.

To ensure our abilities in forming trusting relationships with our learners, including some exceedingly hard to reach learners, we have adopted and developed our approach from a range of models. All staff use the following in the continuous relationship based approach:

- **Attachment Aware** – all staff have received training in Attachment Theory and styles as a means to understand/make sense of behaviour and to ensure appropriate relational strategies are in place to support learners build and maintain healthy relationships
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences** – training and appropriate strategies used that recognise the impact of traumatic life events and lifestyles on development. This includes keeping up-to-date with the knowledge and understanding of neuroscience to enable staff to coregulate children with heightened stressors and poor self-regulation skills.

Baseline Testing – upon entry to centre learners receive baseline testing in the following areas:

WRAT 5
DBQ
Pen portrait
Self-esteem
Attitude to learning
Learning style

The skills, knowledge and understanding from these approaches and information are used as a continuous way of **'being'** at DESC. Every interaction can either challenge or confirm what has gone on for a learner before, therefore we recognise the importance of every moment of connection and seek to ensure that every learner has the most effective and healing relational experience. In addition to the whole ethos and approach to 'relationships' at DESC, we also have a direct taught curriculum that covers appropriate learning outcomes for RSE.

The Personal & Social Development (PSD) Programme of Study details specific structured programme of activities linked to the PSHE National Curriculum and is delivered to all KS4 learners.

We work in a needs-led way which enables us to be flexible following incidents or issues within the media or local community.

These are designed to be both age and developmentally appropriate, building knowledge and life skills over time. They 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, how to manage conflict and how to recognise unhealthy relationships
- How relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health
- Healthy relationships and safety online

At DESC our RSE offer contributes to the foundation of PSHE by ensuring that all learners:

- Develop the confidence in speaking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- Are able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work

- Can protect themselves and ask for help and support
- Are prepared for puberty

Further to the universal curriculum that all our learners access, we also provide RSE interventions for learners who require more specific and/or intensive input. These can take the form of small group, paired or 1:1 interventions:

- Lego therapy
- Nurture
- Emotional Literacy
- Self-esteem
- Emotional needs using the Arts
- Friendship skills
- Social skills
- Team work
- Resilience
- Conflict Resolution
- Protective Behaviours
- Drawing & Talking
- Zones of Regulation
- Mindfulness
- Outdoor learning
- Therapeutic services

We also use a range of external services/agencies to promote the development of healthy relationships. We sometimes involve external agencies to support the teacher-led RSE e.g. sexual health advisers from local sexual health clinics and Theatre in Education plays and workshops.

RSE within PE & Outdoor Activities

Our RSE is also incorporated within our PE & Outdoor Activity provision. We place high importance on supporting our learners to make active and healthy choices that they can maintain in the future. We promote daily physical activity in our centres and at home, providing benefits for mental wellbeing and happiness. The benefits to physical health are also promoted through our PE & Physical Activity provision. These activities also promote building positive, trusting relationships, taking and assessing risks, group dynamics, leadership and mentoring.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Management Committee - Continued involvement through policy evaluation and monitoring

Headteacher - Responsible for the implementation of the policy and liaising with the Management Committee

RSE Co-ordinator - Responsible for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will also disseminate information and provide input relating to RSE

Teaching Staff - All teaching staff are expected to teach RSE, both as discrete Relationship lessons and also embedded within the curriculum

All Staff - As RSE is a whole centre issue, all staff should be aware of this policy and how it relates to them.

Parents/Carers Parents are encouraged to support our RSE provision and have access to this policy.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

KS1/2: Parents/ carers have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered (except than as part of the science curriculum) with immediate effect

KS3/4: Parents/ carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE curriculum. Following any request a meeting will be scheduled to discuss any concerns with the headteacher. Learners who are within three terms of their 16th birthday can make their own informed decision.

Learners have the right to appropriate, purposeful education during any period of withdrawal.

MONITORING and EVALUATION

The Headteacher, Leadership team, SENCo and RSE co-ordinator are responsible for monitoring the standards of learner's progress and achievement and quality of teaching.

The RSE co-ordinator/SENCo supports staff in the teaching and implementation of the RSE whole DESC approach.

The Headteacher and RSE co-ordinator reviews the progress of RSE during review meetings and evaluating strengths and areas for further development.

The Senior Leadership Team, Curriculum Leads, RSE coordinator and SENCos will monitor the quality of RSE through regular monitoring.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by the RSE co-ordinator on an annual basis. As described earlier in this policy, parents and carers will be consulted about the policy and will have an opportunity to share their views. The policy will be available on our website and all stakeholders will be notified of any changes.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2023.