

## **Relationships and Sex Education Policy 2025– 2026**

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**Nominated Governor:** Link Governor for Safeguarding

**Next Review Date:** Summer 2026 (then annually)

Manchester Academy Relationships and Sex Education Policy

### **Policy Statement**

Manchester Academy is committed to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of every child and young person in its care. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self- efficacy. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. The purpose of this policy is to give children and young people the skills, knowledge and understanding that they will need to make responsible decisions about their life, to learn to respect themselves and others, to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help and to move with confidence through childhood into adolescence and adulthood.

Manchester Academy is committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). This policy is applicable to all members of the Manchester Academy community and is available to all interested parties on the school website. This document is reviewed annually or as events or legislation requires. This policy should be read in conjunction with the MA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. These policies include how the school challenges the use of homophobic and other sexually discriminating language or behaviour and child on child abuse.

## **Introduction**

Manchester Academy differentiates curriculum content around relationships and sex education (where sex education is taught), so that parents have clear information. Relationships education does not involve explaining the details of different forms of sexual activity but can cover sensitive topics such as sexual violence to keep children safe.

At Manchester Academy, we understand that some parents may prefer their child not participate in sex education as part of the RSHE curriculum. As such, we conduct an annual consultation with parents to seek their consent before delivering any sex education content. However, it is important to note parents do not have the right to withdraw their pupils from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

## **Content covered**

Relationships and Sex Education can be described as curriculum content which enables students to learn about:

1. Families and people who care for them, including the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children.
2. Forming and maintaining caring and respectful relationships.
3. The links between sexism and misogyny and violence against women and girls and the significance of identifying and learning from positive male role models
4. The characteristics of healthy and respectful relationships, including online,
5. How relationships may affect physical and mental health and wellbeing, and how this contributes to overall wellbeing.
6. Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health and sexual ethics.
7. Healthy lifestyles and physical activity, including how to combat stress.

At MA, we believe that Relationships and Sex Education provides students 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 our students 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 and harmful sexual behaviour. Relationships and sex education will only use teaching and materials which are appropriate to the age and the religious background of the students receiving it.

## **Key Requirements**

- Following an annual parent consultation, students at MA follow a structured MA PSHE curriculum throughout key stages 3 and 4, which includes delivery linked to RSE topics

(\* please note, if a parent has not withdrawn their child to learn sex education, the pupil will only learn content linked to relationships)

- The programme is integrated into the delivery of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and other relevant areas of the curriculum, such as Science and Child development.
- Online safety, including AI generated behaviour is covered through the Computing curriculum but is referenced in PSHE lessons also. Additional guidance is also shared with parents/carers outlining how young people can be kept safe on-line.
- Parents have been consulted when developing and writing this policy.
- The school will show how Relationships and Sex Education is monitored.
- Pupils are taught Relationships and Health Education as part of a timetabled PSHE programme, where core knowledge is broken down in to manageable, well sequenced units and communicated clearly to pupils.
- Pupils are taught so that progression, relevance and differentiation appropriate to the age and development of all students is ensured.
- The PSHE Lead (Mr Andrew Wisdom) will plan delivery across Key Stages 3 and 4 and arrange appropriate training for staff delivering the strands in this area. All materials and resources used are approved by the PSHE Association to ensure quality and alignment with national standards.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The desired outcomes of this policy are to ensure that MA:

- Recognises that aspects of the Relationships and Sex Education Policy are sensitive and call for careful judgement. The policy is complementary to, and supportive of, the role of parents in educating their children about such matters.
- Develops understanding and attitudes that are rooted in values, which prepare students to view relationships in a responsible manner based on mutual respect and develop an acceptance of difference and diversity.

- Affirms the value of loving and caring relationships and encourages the appreciation of marriage, civil partnerships, family life and the implications of parenthood, recognising that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage.
- Sets out clearly issues relating to their personal safety more broadly, including how to communicate about concerns and seek advice without embarrassment.
- Makes students aware of their rights and responsibilities in close personal relationships, including helping students to understand what inappropriate behaviour is, both to reduce its incidence and to build confidence to deal with it if it occurs, seeking to reduce violence, particularly against women and girls.
- Instils a respect for the cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality.
- Teaches the legal and moral principles of consent.
- Develops a graduated, age-appropriate programme that is accessible for all, including SEND.
- Ensures that children are prepared for the changes of puberty.
- Fosters self-esteem and self-awareness, and encourages consideration of values, moral issues, sexuality and inclusivity.