

# RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Company Operations

ADO Services C.I.C.

Incorporating ADO River Valley

Version 1.5 ©2024

2023-2026

Last Ratification By Management Committee	March 2023
Next Review By Management Committee	March 2026
Latest Update by ADO River Valley	March 2024

## 1. Policy Overview

This policy outlines our approach to educating our students about relationships and sex education at ADO River Valley. The policy has been written by following the 'Independent School Standards', and from the statutory guidance from September 2020. The Relationships and Sex Education regulations (2019) made under *sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017*.

This policy content includes, but is not limited to:

- Definition of relationship and sex education
- How ADO River Valley approaches these subjects/ topics
- When these subjects are taught
- Guidelines
- Information for families and caregivers

## 2. Introduction to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

As per the Independent School Standards, in September 2020 it became a requirement for primary students to be taught about relationships, and for secondary students to be taught about relationships and sex education. This topic can also be referred to as 'Sex and Relationship Education' (SRE), however at ADO River Valley we refer to it as RSE.

RSE is educating students about the emotional, social and cultural development of society. This topic is of great importance, as it helps to educate students about the fundamental boundaries of growing up in society within Modern Britain.

Within these subjects we teach about relationships, healthy lifestyles, boundaries, sexuality, sexual health, consent, and personal identity/ diversity, sexual exploitation, online abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. These subjects are often central to mental-wellbeing, and in many cases are interlinked. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise. (Department for Education RSE policy).

We ensure that RSE lessons in no way promote sexual activity, we simply educate students in order to keep themselves safe within these areas whilst exploring issues and different values. In line with our school action plans, we aim to be incorporating specific Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) topics into our curriculum by the autumn of 2024. Discussions surrounding equality and personal preferences shine through our current curriculum, but we feel that it is important to do more for the LGBTQ+ community within our setting.

### 3. How ADO approaches RSE

As a therapeutic school for students with Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) issues, ADO River Valley ensure that RSE is delivered with an approach that is age and emotion appropriate for our students. The Independent School Standards state that the curriculum does not have to address all of the characteristics in every year group, and it is the individual schools' responsibility to take account of learning abilities, ages and emotional intelligence.

Our approach to RSE teaching takes into consideration the protected characteristics as listed in section 4 of the Equality Act 2010, and are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

At ADO River Valley we ensure that our RSE approach promotes fairness and equality, along with the Fundamental British Values of mutual respect, and individual liberty. We also conduct weekly British Values lessons, to help support the students on understanding more about this topic. We DO NOT:

- Ever suggest that male students should be treated with less respect than women, or that a female's role is subservient to that of a male (or vice versa). All genders are treated with equal respect.
- Ever encourage students to see those of particular races or religions as being inferior.
- Ever state that disabled students deserve unequal treatment or support.
- Ever encourage students to believe that people who are pregnant without being married should be punished.

### 4. When RSE is Taught

RSE topics are taught within the personal, social health and economics (PSHE) lessons. PSHE lessons are taught once per week with further curricular opportunities available outside of lessons. In addition, on the last Friday of every half term, we provide a fun project focused approach to PSHE and cover off fundamental topics within the group collaboratively. Within science lessons, biology factors of the RSE curriculum are also taught.

We teach RSE and associated topics within every school year. We ensure that students learning is continually expanded upon year on year and allow them the opportunity to achieve multiple AQA Award Certification within these topics. KS4 and Post16 have the opportunity to chose BTEC options that include RSE topics. Each half term we have an additional focused PSHE day which incorporates RSE, to ensure that there is an emphasis on such topics throughout each school year.

For Sex Education topics, PSHE lessons are taught by one of our 'Youth' or 'Health and Social' care educator assistants, who have a wealth of experience in delivering lessons with sensitive content.

## 5. Guidelines

At ADO River Valley, we follow the '**Fraser Guidelines**' when delivering sex education. We learned about the guidelines through the NSPCC and also Bromley Youth Service Programme. The Fraser guidelines apply specifically to the advice and treatment about contraception and sexual health. The Fraser guidelines are often used by a range of healthcare professionals working with under 16-year-olds, including doctors and nurse practitioners.

As per the 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education', schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in this guidance in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly and collaboratively to students. Teaching will include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for students to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real life situations.

## 6. Information for Families and or Caregivers

ADO River Valley is a 'Not for Profit Community Interest Company', meaning we pride ourselves on involving stakeholders in our delivery of RSE curricular topics. We ensure that our committee, parents, students, and external professionals such as the Metropolitan Police and nurses play a part in this subject and have their voices heard.

Families will be sent information during the half term before RSE will be taught, along with a slip for them to sign if they do NOT consent to their child attending the upcoming lessons. If we do not receive a signed slip then we will automatically deliver the lessons to the students.

Families do reserve the right to withdraw their child from Sex Education, but not Relationships Education. The process of withdrawal will need to be directed to the Headteacher at ADO and can be done at the outset by signing the non-consensual slip, or by calling our office on 02088506778, if a student is to be removed part way through the term.

The Headteacher will then discuss the requests with the families and take the necessary action.

Students who are unable to attend RSE lessons will be provided with alternative work materials and will be set up in a different area to where the topic is being taught.

## 7. Review

All ADO River Valley policies and procedures follow ITIL guidelines to ensure version control, change control and release management of any documents. As a matter of policy, documents can be updated at any time to reflect changes to ADO River Valley procedures, legal changes, OFSTED directives or any other reason to ensure the policies and procedures are accurate and correct. This involves consultation with stakeholders, the ADO River Valley Governance Committee and approval from the directors. All policies and procedures are reviewed at the very least on an annual basis. Regular communication through newsletters, social media, text systems and through our website within the ADO River Valley Library is part of our Release Management.

## 8. Contact

This document was produced by the ADO River Valley Operations team. This version supersedes any previous versions and will be reviewed annually.

All correspondence with regard to this policy, or any other operational policy and procedure should be directed to the ADO River Valley by e-mailing [education@adorivervalley.co.uk](mailto:education@adorivervalley.co.uk) or calling 0208 855 6778, requesting to speak to the School Business Manager or in writing c/o School Business Manager, ADO River Valley School, 126 Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 3DP.