

Background:

Following the introduction of the new statutory guidance for Relationships & Sex Education in secondary schools which came into effect in Summer 2020, Co-op Academy Belle Vue consulted all staff and parents/carers (referred to as families) on our proposed RSE curriculum plan and RSE policy.

The consultation was open for 4 school weeks and involved clear communication of our curriculum plan and proposed RSE policy to all stakeholders.

In line with the guidance in the letters from the secretary of state for education in March and October of 2023, examples of resources were provided to parents. These resources were provided in the form of example student booklet sections from the relationships topic for each year group.

The communication given to families via email included information on our statutory duties regarding RSE, a link to the policy available on the academy website, government guidance documents on RSE in secondary schools and information on how to respond to the consultation. This email was sent to all families. The curriculum was also adapted based on student voice and continually responds to this.

Information was also provided on a family forum event for families to hear from the Vice Principal of Behaviour and Attendance about the RSE curriculum and policy. Staff were provided curriculum information and the RSE policy and asked to respond during the consultation period via a Google Form. Parents were given access to another Google Form to log feedback and feedback was also taken during both family forum events.

Underlined sections signify where the curriculum was adapted.

Outcomes:

In total there were 11 parental responses to the consultation. Eleven parents responded via the Google Form and four of these attended the family forum event. Of the 11 Google Form responses 10 confirmed they had read the RSE policy document. These numbers are based on our current student numbers of 958.

In total 2 members of staff responded to provide additional feedback to the RSE consultation.

Question One - Looking at our RSE policy and curriculum plan, are there any topics that you feel are being taught too early, when the students are too young? If yes, please list those topics and reasons below:

- Nine respondents thought the age at which the students receive this information was appropriate in this way.
- A parent referenced certain topics being taught too early in Year 7, yet without specifying which ones. The comment includes:
 - *Yes, year 7 is still too young, maybe year 8.*
- A parent expressed specific satisfaction with how the academy was handling RSE. Comments include:
 - *In my opinion they are relevant to this age group even though some of them are behaving like they are older than their age.*

During the Family forum events some parents asked questions regarding the sex education elements of the curriculum. Parents at the family forum event raised concerns about the content students have access to online through their mobile devices.

Response - As an academy we are committed to cover the required content at KS3 and KS4 for RSE. These topics are introduced in an age appropriate way. In year 7 students look at relationships that focus on making new friendships, consent in this context with friends and peer pressure and then touch on the idea of

romance. In year 8 students look at relationship values and respect for all sexual orientations rooted in the Equality Act. In year 9 students look at healthy and unhealthy friendships, building relationships, conflict resolution, consent and then begin to look at an introduction to sex education including personal choice, STI and the legal view of behaviour. family values When concerns surrounding this were raised at the family forum events parents were told and understood that the curriculum in no way promotes sexual activity. RSE is designed to provide age-appropriate information to help children develop a healthy understanding of relationships. Early education promotes a positive attitude and establishes a foundation for informed decision-making later in life. No inappropriate images are used nor anything not relevant to the explanation. The curriculum is designed to provide factual information to keep students safe and combat the false information they read online. Parental right to withdraw from these elements is clear in the policy and was re-communicated during both family forum events.

Question Two - Looking at our RSE policy and curriculum plan, are there any topics that you feel are being taught too late and students would benefit from learning about at a younger age? If yes, please list those topics and reasons below:

- Eleven respondents thought the age at which the students receive this information was appropriate in this way. Comments include:
 - *In my opinion they are relevant to the age group.*
- A member of staff brought up the need to introduce instruction and guidance related to personal hygiene. Their comment states:
 - *Personal Hygiene should be taught at the start of the academic year.*

Response: These topics are introduced in an age appropriate way as mentioned in the above response. Content on the importance of personal hygiene will be introduced at the start of the academic year. Some further comments raise additional areas to cover. This is covered in the response to question 4.

Question Three: Are there any topics that you feel have been missed from our RSE curriculum that should be included? If yes, please list the topics below:

- One respondent raised a topic area here
 - *Microaggressions should be included in the topic of discrimination against groups of people and race.*

Response: The topic of microaggressions is touched upon a few times across the whole of the curriculum, particularly in each year group's half term 3 content, which generally addressed the importance of diversity; discrimination, prejudice and the idea of respecting everyone despite any differences. This means that in addition to this topic being present in the current curriculum, it is also revisited yearly to ensure mutual respect between members of our community and beyond.

Question Four: Do you have any further comments or suggestions to make relating to the RSE provision at Co-op Academy Belle Vue?

- One respondent left a suggestion to this question.
 - *Schedule or plan for the next academic year, if for example groups A - E have CARE lessons in the same period, invite a guest to come in and teach them something new and exciting.*

Response: CARE lessons incorporate substantial quantities of reading aloud and writing due to the nature of the curriculum and it being intentionally delivered through a literacy focused approach. For this fundamental reason, we do not believe that guests coming into school to deliver RSE content would be the most appropriate and no changes to the curriculum will be made.

Following the consultation the policy was reviewed and approved by the governing body. Governors were satisfied with the policy and consultation process.