

**TRINITY ACADEMY NEWCASTLE TRUST**

**RSE POLICY**

**Approved by the Committee – December 2024  
On behalf of the Board**

**Next Review Date – January 2026**

## **Introduction**

A fundamental aspect of the Trinity Academy Newcastle Multi Academy Trusts ethos is to develop Confident, Competent and Kind Citizens of the Future improving their knowledge, skills and personal attributes, helping them maintain their own health and safety whilst preparing them for a range of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences which adult life may present.

It recognises the importance of looking at the whole child, understanding the effect history and experiences have had on their development, whilst helping them embrace the challenges of creating happy and successful adult lives, gaining the knowledge they will need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy.

Trinity Academy Newcastle Multi Academy Trust ethos aims to impact both academic and non-academic outcomes for our learners, improving their social engagement, resilience and understanding of self-worth.

The personal development of learners is integrated into our whole Trust approach through a sequential and all-inclusive system using a range of universal, targeted and external source interventions, being part of the Trust's broader approach to safeguarding and the welfare of children.

This policy covers Trinity Academy Newcastle Multi Academy Trust; here on named: 'The Trust' approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

The policy is informed and underpinned by the Trust's values of being kind, calm and honest through our comprehensive trauma informed approach.

The Trusts personal development curriculum aims to create:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, making progress and achieving
- Resilient and empathetic learners both within the Trust and in wider society
- Confident individuals who can live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society
- Strong interpersonal relationships based on healthy values

Learners are also taught explicitly about British Values which are defined as:

- Democracy & the rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Parents will be informed about the policy through the school website.

## **Legislation (Statutory Regulations and Guidelines)**

Under the Education Act 2002, all schools must provide a balanced broadly-based curriculum which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and in society
- Prepares pupils at the school for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

The 2006 Education and Inspections Act placed a duty on Governing Bodies to:

- Promote the wellbeing of pupils at the school

Revised Department for Education statutory guidance state from September 2020 all schools must deliver:

- Relationships Education (Primary) and Relationships and Sex Education (Secondary).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (2024 version)

### **Links with other policies**

This policy works in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti-Bulling Policy
- Relational Behaviour Policy
- Relationship Policy
- Mental health for student policy
- Bullying and harassment policy
- Equality and diversity policy
- Online staff policy
- Peer on peer abuse policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Young carers policy

### **Personal development**

The Trust uses a biopsychosocial perspective in its approach to personal development of learners. This holistic approach to understanding a learner's presentation through attributing multiple causes rather than just one to the action allows for behaviour to be considered as interactions of the body, mind, and environment which all affect each other in different ways.

Through this lens, personal development is taught holistically throughout the trust embedded in all subjects and reinforced through all interactions at part of the belief "Make every moment matter" as well as through set designated lessons.

### **Containment**

The containment of the environment is key to provide the ideal environment in which positive personal development can flourish and mitigate against traumatising. The Trust behavioural policy is designed to help in maintaining an environment which learner and staff can feel safe and secure. (See Relational behavioural policy)

## Universal offer

The Trust uses an internally developed framework of aspects it considered essential to the personal development of its students. Through this framework, we holistically offer students opportunities and experiences which support development in these areas, tracking these through a key of embedded aspects designed around each key stage. In turn, this allows for every opportunity to be monitored and recorded (See Personal development milestones).

The Trust's universal interventions are based on trauma-informed processes, as outlined in Appendix (i) (Universal Interventions). These interventions are designed to foster the holistic development of our learners, with a focus on delivering a high-quality, robust, and well-informed curriculum. At the heart of this approach is teaching respect for all individuals, regardless of sex, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Trust is committed to promoting an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity and actively challenges prejudice, as further explained below.

The universal offer ensures a whole-school approach, incorporating contributions from governors, parents and caregivers, staff, and learners. It emphasizes the importance of consistent, sensitive handling of key topics across all staff. The curriculum covers a wide range of areas, including relationships, family life, friendships, and emotional well-being. It also provides age-appropriate education on consent, mental health, managing emotions, and personal safety, while addressing specific safeguarding concerns such as exploitation, radicalization, and grooming.

- PSHE/RSE lessons

Taught lessons encompass all areas of your learner's personal development, taking into account the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Health Education (updated 2022)', 'Teaching Online Safety in School (updated 2023)' and 'Parental Engagement on Relationships Education (October 2019)' whilst aligning with statutory Education Act 2002, Equality Act 2010, and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 guidance. Furthermore, these sessions encompass psychoeducation around mental health, emotional management and literacy, interpersonal relationships and pro social development, whilst educating learner directly about risks, such as online safety, exploitation, bullying, and peer abuse.

PSHE/RSE sessions are delivered by teachers in weekly timetabled lessons. This will include the statutory subject required while encompassing wider aspects of psychoeducation and emerging social themes.

Additional key information delivered by external speakers and supported by the PSHE/RSE lead (KS 3 and 4)

Enrichment and drop-down days will deliver targeted sessions around key topics to address cultural or social issues.

The content of this curriculum is based not only on statutory DfE requirements but encompasses the emerging needs of the schools within the Trust, derived from themes from data and self-evaluation of strategic improvements.

- Votes for schools

The trust has invested in the Votes for schools platform, aiding the delivered of this curriculum and allowing for emerging themes to be covered. Furthermore, the system allows for understanding of learner voice around these key topics, providing insight into their perception of the theme and highlight whether further education is needed.

- Embedded in the curriculum

To reinforce across the curriculum, the learner's personal development is embedded in all subjects/curriculum as part of the trauma informed approach, enabling learners to be supported in transferring skills into different areas and develop stronger brain connections to achieve developmental milestones.

Through the use of the personal development milestones, clear links are made to each lesson allowing for the application of the curriculum to be apparent.

This is monitored for delivery via learning walks and workbook scrutiny, whilst learners' progress is monitored via the Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) tracking system.

- All interactions

A core element of our ethos is to treat every interaction with learners as an opportunity to promote healthy development while also addressing and guiding them towards more positive behavioural choices. We focus on fostering self-protection skills and encouraging help-seeking behaviour, ensuring learners are equipped to report concerns and are confident that their worries will be taken seriously.

This is conducted using a calm, kind and honest elements of the PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) approach to allow correction before correction, using discipline as a restorative, not a punitive measure. (See Mental health for learner's policy). This again may be monitored via the use of the personal development milestones.

### **Guidelines for delivery of**

- Any new topic in PSHE/RSE will be introduced taking into account pupils' prior knowledge and experiences
- Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting
- No one is forced to take part in a discussion
- No one, teacher or learner, will be expected to answer a personal question
- Research shows that attempts to scare or shock young people into making healthy choices rarely work and often backfire. The learner will be reassured that the majority of young people make positive healthy lifestyle choices
- Learners are helped to make connections in PSHE/RSE to help understand and inform their 'real-life' experiences.
- Parents/caregivers will be given access to curriculum content and materials on request and engage proactively regarding sensitive issues are taught.

### **Safe and Effective Practice:**

The trust approach to personal development often draw on pupils' real-life experiences. A safe and supportive learning environment will be created by establishing ground rules in each

context for the delivery of subject material. Staff delivering will ensure the pupils, who indicate they may be at risk, get appropriate support by liaising with the appropriate pastoral team and adhering to the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Any learners needing support for their wellbeing and mental health to be referred on for support. The trust ensures only resources that do not compromise their political impartiality or present contested views in an unbalanced way are used in a factual and age appropriate way.

### **Equality of Opportunity:**

Classroom practice and pedagogy will take into account pupils' age, ability, readiness and cultural background and pupils with SEND and will be adjusted to enable all learners to access the learning. The Trust uses its personal development curriculum as a way to address diversity issues and to ensure equality for all by addressing contextual issues identified through our pastoral management system and wellbeing surveys. Its delivery is designed to comply with the Equality Act 2010. Provisions within the Equality Act allow the School to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of protected characteristics.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from those parts of RSE *not* within the national curriculum.

### **Targeted interventions**

Targeted intervention have been designed to support learner's unique aspects of mental health as they emerge. A full list of these is available in appendix (ii) (Targeted interventions). Each has a theoretical basis and approaches to support the learner's personal development in areas which may be a concern. One element of these targeted intervention is the group or individual psychoeducation around emerging need.

Additional key information required by the learner cohort will be facilitated either by drop down days or group sessions, delivered by either external speakers or internal staff member. These will be measured using both learners set criteria and specific psychometric testing around the areas of need being targeted.

The use of this targeted interventions will be recorded on the SEMH and EHCP tracking document.

### **Definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

RSE is an entitlement for all children and young people and must:

- Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, to make informed choices. In schools this should be part of compulsory curriculum provision;

- Be inclusive in terms of sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience particularly HIV status and pregnancy;
- Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe relationships and ensure good communication about these issues;
- Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media;
- Provide opportunities for reflection to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care;
- Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner;
- Ensure children and young people are clearly informed of their rights such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding;
- Be relevant and meet the needs of children and young people, and actively involve them as participants, advocates and evaluators in developing good quality provision;
- Be delivered by competent and confident educators;
- Be provided within a learning environment which is safe for the children, young people and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.

### **KEY stage delivery:**

The focus during Primary RSE focuses on the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular emphasis on friendships, family and relationships with other children and adults. The sex education content included in the science curriculum for Key Stage 2 will be taught at the lower site of TAN.

The aim of RSE at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 is to give pupils the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and successful marriage or other types of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships is. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

RSE is also supported through science lessons. In particular, reproduction in humans (e.g. the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycles, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS).

### **Working with Parent/Carers**

The PSHE/RSE curriculum provides opportunities for parents and carers to work with the trust to support their children's personal development. The trust through a range of

methods will supply parents/ carers with information advice and guidance, opportunities to discuss the content and delivery, to reinforce their development at home and fully understand their right for withdrawal from aspects of the program.

Parents and carers, will have a right to withdraw their child from some or all parts of the RSE aspect of until three terms before they turn 16. This can be requested from the head teacher once the parents/carers have full understanding of the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This process will be documented by the Trust and record kept securely.

Three terms before the child turns 16, if the child wishes to receive this education, arrangements will be made for this.

### **Staff delivery**

The Trust is committed to supporting teachers to ensure they are confident and sensitive in delivering PSHE/RSE topics. It will continue to support educators to be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to address complex issues with confidence and care. In addition, the Trust employs an internal quality assurance process to monitor and evaluate the delivery of the PSHE/RSE curriculum. This process includes learning walks, book scrutiny, etc. to ensure that the curriculum is being delivered effectively and remains responsive to the needs of learners. Based on these evaluations, the policy is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to meet the highest standards and aligns with best practices both in personal development and safeguarding in education.

### **Intended Outcomes:**

The aim of our personal development curriculum is:

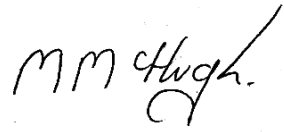
- Develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives now and in the future
- Learn to make responsible decisions e.g. about alcohol, drugs, relationships and future careers
- Learn to recognise and manage risk and take increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions
- Understand the importance of wellbeing and how to tackle issues that can affect their ability to learn
- Focus on the importance of building healthy and positive relationships
- Develop skills such as teamwork, communication and resilience
- Be encouraged to make positive contributions to their families, schools and communities
- Explore differences and learn to value diversity in all its forms
- Reflect on their own individual values and attitudes
- Identify and articulate feelings and emotions and manage difficult situations positively

### **Confidentiality:**

Learners will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidentially and will be informed that, if certain disclosures are made, the information may be disclosed to the Safeguarding lead.



**Signed on behalf of the Board:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MM Hugh', written over a horizontal line.

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**Michael McHugh (Chairperson of the Board)**

**Date: December 2024**

## Universal interventions (Appendix i)

At Trinity Academy Newcastle Multi Academy Trust, learners enter into our care with a wider range of pre-existing social, emotional and mental health conditions. As a proactive approach to supporting these needs within education, we have developed a whole Trust approach using the lens of trauma-informed education.

### Relational based approach

Relationships are key to supporting our learners in all areas of their personal development. We find many learners enter into our care with a need for control to feel safe, many having developed a blocked sense of trust as a result of past experiences. Therefore, it is essential that learners can develop a sense of trust with staff and have their voices truly heard. Through the processes of using PACE and empathic listening ( explained below), staff can create a strong developmental relationship with the learner to act as both an instrument to influence their actions whilst creating much-needed support networks for them to access around their mental health.

#### Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy (PACE)

The system of PACE is used by all staff within the Trust to facilitate safety and personal development. It is used to support positive interaction with learners, providing a nonviolent means of communication to prevent escalation of presenting behaviour, whilst aiding the learners in healthy verbal expression of need. Each of the four elements works in a different way to support positive interactions.

**Playfulness** not only conveys optimism and hope when faced with challenging emotions, but it also provides context to help learners understand that problems are not experienced in isolation from the routines and special events of daily living. It uses lightness and laughter, looking for ways to experience and enhance the positive qualities of their relationships, without inducing shame around events and actions. This allows the child to experience a bit of happiness and companionship when feeling overwhelmed with difficult emotions.

**Acceptance** involves the process of not judging the learner's inner life of thoughts, feelings, and wishes, helping them feel they are safe to express themselves. Whatever they feel is validated and used as a base for further discussion to provide staff with a greater understanding of the lens which the learners see the world through.

**Curiosity** is also a non-judgmental inquisition into the learner's inner world. It enables staff to begin to know the inner life of the child, in turn, helps the learner to develop the reflective functioning needed to become aware of and be able to express their inner life. It is not intrusive but rather represents an interest in experiences, perceptions and views of the learner's world.

**Empathy** for the learners enables them the experience they are not alone in their distress. This can help them feel understood and listened to, whilst acting to strengthen the connection within the relationship. The use of empathy is contiguous, helping the learner develop their own and build skills to connect well with others.

Overall, the use of PACE may, for the first time, help a learner experience the feeling that someone truly wants to understand them, with no evaluation of it being right or wrong or their sense of self, their identity or how they have made sense of things is not being questioned.

### **Affective-reflective dialogue**

Once an interpersonal connection is made with a learner, the capacity for affective-reflective conversation increases. Affective-reflective dialogue is best described as using a therapeutic conversation with a learner to explore the mixture of emotions presented and aiding reflections around events connected to this to aid a shift in the perception and narrative. This process of connection and then correction can allow for staff to have a great influence on the learner's development enabling them to still feel an element of control whilst allowing for discipline to be applied around expectations.

After connecting using PACE, staff stay present with the child and pondered about possible drivers around the presenting behaviours, using terms such as " I wonder, I imagine, I notice ". This use of non-threatening statements which past comments on why the child is feeling a certain way can either lead to further discussion or result in insight for the learners.

### **Co-regulation of affect**

The regulation of affect can be a constant challenge for some of our learners. Many learners need to be supported in their ability around co-regulation before they can independently regulate their emotions. To support this staff use PACE to initiate calm, kind and honest interactions as a way to connect emotionally. Once achieved, shared affect can assist in co-regulation through the modelling of grounding strategies and assist in interactive repair whenever needed using restorative practices.

### **Co-created narrative**

The relational-based approach allows for opportunities for the co-creation of new meanings to events and experiences within their learner's life. Through applying new meanings to events which historically induced shame and anger a new narrative can be created which is coherent and comprehensive, based on evidence and without gaps and distortions characteristics. This is only possible via the use of strong interpersonal relationships with key adults to allow for the sense of trust needed. This reframing and establishing of a new co-created narrative can overall assist in the formation of a new healthy identity. However, we are aware safety always precedes exploration and when exploration jeopardises safety, it is discontinued until safety is re-established.

### **Emotionally Available adults**

One key element of the Trusts approach is the consistence of adults being emotionally available adults. There may be times when key adults which whom the learners feel safe are not available. All staff have been trained and supported in being emotionally available. Through this consistent approach by staff, all staff can be seen as safe. Providing a whole school, consistent calm and kind approach to improvement in emotional management through aiding reduced activation of their stress response system supported in learners. It can reduce the constant rumination about how others are going to act and allow for predictability and routine to reinforce the feelings of safety.

## **Classroom organisation**

A range of different elements is encompassed into classroom practice to support learners. Reduced class sizes allow for greater levels of support to provide to accommodate emerging needs the learner may have around academic ability and neurodevelopmental, social, emotional and mental health. Furthermore, these areas are supported universally through a range of interventions to meet a neurodivergent need which supports all learners. These include dyslexia-friendly fonts, visual timetables, scaffolding displays, step-by-step breakdown of tasks, etc. The classroom physical environment is monitored using a trauma-informed lens. Aspects such as organised spaces and classroom layout have been carefully considered to prevent emotional triggers and reinforce social engagement.

## **Zones of regulation (adapted version)**

To facilitate the healthy communication of needs, zones of regulation system has recently been introduced. The version used within the Trust has been adapted for the Zones of regulation programme and aid learners to express their emotional state to staff, reducing the need to present internal discomfort via physical expression. Furthermore, this system supports the learner's understanding of others' emotional distress, allowing for opportunities for shared empathy and understanding.

## **Trauma-informed /RSE**

As well as covering statutory requirements, the Trust enriches its /RSE curriculum with psychoeducation, helping the learners understand some of their reactions and feelings. In turn, this assists in explaining and, in many cases, normalising the learner's thoughts, actions and feelings, whilst providing new strategies which they can use. These embedded elements include Dan Siegel, the Hand brain model, the chimp paradox, emotional intelligence and box breathing, along with many more.

## **Targeted interventions (Appendix ii)**

Trinity Academy Newcastle Multi Academy Trust understands that all learners' diverse SEMH and SEND needs cannot be supported fully through universal interventions. With that in mind, each Academy has the capability to apply a range of different therapeutic interventions. Using the skills of staff on each site, these interventions can be used to aid in both the reprocessing of social, emotional and mental health challenges, whilst supporting the symptoms of more clinical need.

The range of internal targeted interventions for each site will be selected from the following:

### **Wave 1**

- Parenting chats
- Discrete personalist approach for sensory, academic and SEN needs
- Key emotional available adult
- Movement breaks
- Mindfulness
- Co regulation time

### **Wave 2**

- Eco based therapeutic experience
- Mentoring
- Forest school
- Therapeutic Boxing
- Sensory integration
- Bibliotherapy
- Drawing and talking attachment intervention
- Lego therapy
- Attachment play
- Psychoeducation

### **Wave 3**

- Counselling

Many wave 1 interventions are an extension of universal approaches and provide discrete targeted support for need. For wave 2 and 3, intervention are more purposefully designed and are supported via a strong evidence base which has been developed to highlight the theoretical basis of the approach.

Access to these targeted interventions are available through the Trusts internal referral process. Either through a staff referral or considered as part of the internal triage system, learners are recognised as needing additional support. From this referral, a formulation of need can be developed to consider the best course of action needed, allowing a range of external and internal interventions can be put into place.

Each internal intervention will have set areas to target, along with suggested duration and impact measure for clear evaluation of the learner progress.