

# Relationships and Sex Education, and Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Policy

West Heath School



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Copies of this policy are available on the School Website - <https://westheathschool.com/policies-and-procedures> or as a hard copy on request from the School Office.

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# 1. Rationale and Aims

## Rationale

This policy addresses the statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996 replacing the previous SRE guidance 2000, and sets out how West Heath School will deliver Relationship and sex education in both primary and secondary phases. The policy also incorporates and addresses DfE guidance on Physical health and mental wellbeing (Primary and Secondary) Sept 2021.

## Aims

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools; however West Heath School acknowledges the importance Health Education and therefore also follows this guidance. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools

The policy should:

- provide all stakeholders with information regarding the purpose of RSE within the context of West Heath School
- to ensure a clear understanding of the school's legal obligation in regard to RSE and the differences within the primary and secondary curriculum
- to inform the effective design, delivery and monitoring of RSE.

# 2. Legislation and Guidance

- Statutory Guidance *Introduction to requirements*. Update 13/09/2021
- Keeping children safe in education 2021
- The Equality Act 2010 and The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools
- Sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.
- DfEE 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance', 2000.
- Equality Act 2010
- National Healthy School Standard, Sex and Relationships Education 2001
- Teenage Pregnancy, Social Inclusion Unit 1999
- Sex and relationship education, healthy lifestyles and financial capability QCA
- 2005 Sex Education Forum
- Social Exclusion Unit, 1999, *Teenage Pregnancy Strategy*. Social Exclusion Unit, London.
- PSHE Association 2022

# 3. Definitions

RSE – Relationship and sex education

PSHE – Personal, social and health education

RE - Religious Education

Self Science – A personal development subject at WHS focused on PSHE objectives and Speech and Language development. To be renamed during the 2022 redesign of the curriculum.

Life Skills – A Personal development subject focused on functional skills within the PSHE curriculum. To be renamed during the 2022 redesign of the curriculum.

SMSC – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

## 4. Principles and Values

*“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. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.” DfE, 2021.*

Students at West Heath are particularly vulnerable and have social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Therefore our teaching of personal development including RSE and Physical health and mental wellbeing, is especially important for these students and core to our curriculum. Teachers will be required to skilfully support students with the content based on their developmental stage and an awareness of students' needs and personal history that may impact on their ability to process the content.

Teaching will take place in small groups and where appropriate, and with parental agreement, on an individual basis if necessary due to student needs.

At West Heath School we prioritise curriculum opportunities to 'promote pupils' self-control and ability to self-regulate, and strategies for doing so' (DfE, 2021). We acknowledge that physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa. We believe that our teaching should address any stigma attached to health issues, especially those to do with mental wellbeing.

We teach lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender content throughout our curriculum ensuring it is incorporated in our schemes of work. Whilst we understand the need for age appropriate content to be delivered, we will work in a climate that promotes openness and acceptance for the LGBT community.

The school abides by the Equality Act 2010 and within its ethos and teaching the school will not discriminate against the protected characteristics (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation).

West Heath School understands the importance of working with external agencies and having regular consultation with all stakeholders. During the redesigning of the curriculum in 2022 there will be in-depth consultation on the entire Personal Development curriculum. Due to the pandemic this will require additional planning and the use of virtual spaces for discussions.

## 5. What is RSE?

RSE concerns the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

'In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.' DfE 2021

## **6. Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationships Education and Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing**

RSE is taught within our Personal Development curriculum which is undergoing redesign in 2022. The Personal Development curriculum is covered across the curriculum within National Curriculum subjects and non-statutory subjects. RSE and PSHE are currently and predominantly taught within the Self Science and Life Skills curriculum. Particular care is being given within the redesign to ensure total coverage of all objectives whilst avoiding duplication and to ensure knowledge and understanding is built upon to enable better outcomes.

Primary RSE curriculum:

Students within our primary phase have relationships education that focuses on students learning the fundamental blocks and characteristics of positive relationships which includes:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Sex Education will be delivered by teachers who have been trained to do so.

On occasions where a student feels unable to work with one of said staff, they may be taught by a member of staff with whom the student has a particularly positive relationship. In such instances, the member of staff delivering the lesson will be supported by a trained colleague, and the arrangement will first have been discussed and agreed with parents.

If Sex Education is deemed appropriate for the Primary phase students above the statutory requirement delivered through Science, parents will be informed in advance of details of the teaching to take place.

Secondary RSE curriculum:

Students in the secondary phase of their education will have an RSE curriculum that will focus upon:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

The wider Personal Development curriculum focuses on PSHE, RSE, and Physical health and mental wellbeing. Whilst the curriculum devotes dedicated lessons to these objectives, West Heath School as an SEMH school emphasises the importance of cross-curricular learning and a constant holistic focus on supporting students with their personal development.

Some objectives are delivered in discrete lessons such as online safety within the computing curriculum but are reinforced and practised across other areas of the curriculum utilising real-world learning whenever possible including tutor time. Apart from the current Life Skills and Self Science lessons, other key lessons include PE, RE, OAA, Computing, Forest Schools and Science.

Students are also offered:

- Therapeutic support as appropriate from the Therapy department
- Access to a range of interventions that widen their experience and support building confidence and self-esteem.

## 7. Curriculum Aims of RSE

### The Primary RSE objectives

#### **Families and people who care for me**

Students should know:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

#### **Caring friendships**

Students should know:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

#### **Respectful relationships**

Students should know:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- the conventions of courtesy and manners
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

## **Online relationships**

Students should know:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
- how information and data is shared and used online

## **Being safe**

Students should know:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- where to get advice, for example family, school or other sources

## The Secondary RSE objectives

### **Families**

Students should know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children
- what marriage is, including their legal status – for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting
- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

Students should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as:
  - trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict

- reconciliation and ending relationships, this includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

## **Online and media**

Students should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- the impact of viewing harmful content
- that specifically sexually explicit material, for example pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

## **Being safe**

Students should know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online

## **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

Pupils should know:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing



- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

## **The Law**

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

## **Physical health and mental wellbeing**

Primary objectives:

### **Mental wellbeing**

Students should know:

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online)
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough

### **Internet safety and harms**

Students should know:

- that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits
- about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing
- how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
- why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted
- that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health
- how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted
- where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

## **Physical health and fitness**

Students should know:

- the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle
- the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise
- the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity)
- how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health

## **Healthy eating**

Students should know:

- what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content)
- the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals
- the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health)

## **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco**

Students should know:

- the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking

## **Health and prevention**

Students should know:

- how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body
- about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist
- about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing
- the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination

## **Basic first aid**

Students should know:

- how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary
- concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries

## **Changing adolescent body**

Students should know:

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes
- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

## Secondary objectives:

### **Mental wellbeing**

Students should know:

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns
- common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression)
- how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health
- the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness

### **Internet safety and harms**

Students should know:

- the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online
- how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours

### **Physical health and fitness**

Students should know:

- the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress
- the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardio-vascular ill-health
- about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation

### **Healthy eating**

Students should know:

- how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer

### **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco**

Students should know:

- the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions
- the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances
- the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood
- the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency
- awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks
- the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so

## Health and prevention

Students should know:

- about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist
- (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening
- the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn

## Basic first aid

Students should know:

- basic treatment for common injuries
- life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed

## Changing adolescent body

Students should know:

- key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing
- the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health
- Eating disorders and extreme weight loss are a specialised area and schools should use qualified support or advice as needed. Schools may consider accessing support from the NHS or local specialist services who may be able to provide advice and CPD for teachers.
- Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation is usually best taught after 12 years old.

## 8. Right of Withdrawal for RSE

Primary school aged students:

- Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education
- Parents can withdraw students from any sex education that is in addition to the Science curriculum and is non-statutory for the student's age
- Parents should request in writing to the Principal their wish to withdraw their child from sex education or from aspects by completing the Withdrawal form in Appendix A
- A child who is withdrawn from sex education will receive alternative work and the request for withdrawal will be documented on the appropriate record for the student

Secondary aged Students:

- Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education
- Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory sex education within RSE and the curriculum offer up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this
- Parent(s) will be asked to complete the withdrawal form in Appendix A
- The Principal and school will discuss the application for withdrawal with parent(s) and every effort will be made to explain the RSE curriculum and its importance. If the parent(s) still wishes to withdraw their child then the appropriate school record will be updated including the notes related to discussion with the parent(s) on the subject
- A child who is withdrawn from sex education will receive alternative work

## **9. Confidentiality**

Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and must follow the school's Safeguarding policy. Students should be aware of the importance of respect and confidentiality between themselves based on the sensitive nature of the discussions they may have in an RSE lesson.

In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16 year old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse advice should be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction the Safeguarding policy and with documentation relating to the Personal Development curriculum.

## **11. Consultees**

The Principal, Senior Management Team, Student Services Committee and Trustees of the School.

Other Participants & Stakeholders:

Students, Parents and Carers, All Staff and Teaching and Learning Committee

Monitoring & Evaluation:

Head of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee, Trustees

Heads of Department for:

Science, IT, Outdoor Education, PE

Personal Development

School Nurse

## Appendix 1

Request to withdraw a student			
Name of child		Form	
Name of parent		Date	
Please state the reasons for wishing to withdraw your child from part of or all of the sex education curriculum.			
Any other information you wish the school to consider?			
Parent signature		Date	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>For school use only</i></b>  <i>Principal or delegated staff member to record any further discussions and outcome.</i></p>			
Name	Discussion or outcome	Date	Signed