

RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help make sure students are able to make responsible and well informed decisions for any area of their life

RSHE is underpinned by the ethos and values of The Weald School and we uphold it as an entitlement for all our students. We believe that all young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSHE. We believe that through providing high quality RSHE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school by enabling students to understand how broad our communities can be and to see how to take responsibility for their health. High quality RSHE also follows our commitment to equality and celebration of difference. We recognise the need to work with parents and carers to ensure a shared understanding of RSHE and to deliver an effective and personalised programme that meets the needs of our students.

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSHE to all students under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSHE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At The Weald School, we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review - a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation - the policy will be shared with key staff members such as the SENDCo, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and the Headteacher for their consideration and for any areas to be amended
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation - parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy to voice their views
4. Student consultation - we investigated what students want from their RSHE and any necessary adaptations were made
5. Ratification - once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

4. Definition

RSHE should give young people 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 a successful marriage or other type 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 is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. (RSHE Guidance, p25)

We define relationship education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships. This would include things like friendships, attraction, and romance, types of families, family life, sexuality and committed relationships, intimate relationships and consent as well as keeping safe on and off line.

We define sex education more about learning the 'facts' i.e. the knowledge of human reproduction, contraception, safer sex and sexual health.

We take the approach that RSHE is best approached in an integrated way considering gender equity and human rights. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.

5. Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is available through our [school website](#), but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents/carers, students and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

For more information about our curriculum, see Appendix 1.

6. Delivery of RSHE

The RSHE programme will be delivered as part of the school's whole school approach to relationships, health and personal development. The main programme of study will be taught as a discrete subject in what we call Relationship Health and Personal Development (RHPD) lessons and covers a wide range of topics. RSHE is also delivered through science and small parts in RS, PE, Food Technology, Computer Science, English and drama as well as form time and assemblies. RHPD is taught in mixed gender and ability groups fortnightly or weekly.

RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

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

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

The RSHE programme is taught taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

6.1 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all students' experiences
- During lessons, makes students feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that students learn about these topics in an environment that is appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

6.2 Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress

7. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSHE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with students' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum

- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers upon request

We won't, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSHE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will endeavour to support the provision and development of RSHE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

8.3 The designated Head of Character and Culture

The Head of Character and Culture will maintain an overview of the RSHE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, developing the provision to meet students' needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation. Their responsibility also includes reviewing any requests for withdrawal from any aspect of the RSHE curriculum (see section 9).

8.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the components of RSHE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

All members of our teaching staff are involved in the school's RSHE provision. Some will teach RSHE through the relationship, health and personal development (RHPD) programme, through tutor time, and some through science and other curriculum areas. To help with this teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to RSHE and policy and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.

Non-teaching staff may also be involved in delivering the RSHE curriculum by having input into the curriculum planning, leading tutor time activities, delivering assemblies, and in their important pastoral support role for students.

8.5 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. They will be periodically consulted about whether the RSHE curriculum is meeting their needs.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents and carers have the right to request and excuse their child/children from sex education with the exception of those parts that are included in the statutory Science National Curriculum 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.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationship and Health Education at secondary level and we believe the content of these subjects - such as family, friendship, relationships, feelings, sexuality, gender identity, consent, harassment, keeping safe, laws, media safety and ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle - are important for all children to be taught.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing to their child's Head of House and to the Head of Character and Culture for consideration. A meeting will then be arranged to discuss concerns and make suitable alternative arrangements. Should a parent/carer wish to view the materials prior then a request can be made in writing to the Head of Character and Culture.

Alternative school work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

Please note: Relationship sex and health topics can incidentally arise in other subjects, lessons and situations and it is not possible to withdraw students from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

Where needed, the headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE. The materials from these external agencies will be checked to ensure they comply with the guidance of this policy (see section 7).

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the Head of Character and Culture, along with the School's Senior Leadership Team through:

- Lesson observations/drop ins/learning walks
- Work and planning scrutiny
- Looking at samples of students' work
- Student voice

Students' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the incumbent Head of Character and Culture annually or when government legislation or guidelines change. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school students should know

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• 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, e.g. 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/carers 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online), including: 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 (e.g. 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

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	• 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 e.g. 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	• 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)

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• 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, e.g. 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 • 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 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/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing • 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