



# Westways Primary School Relationships and Health Education (RHE) Policy

May 2024

## **Overview**

### **Department for Education states:**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and provide that pupils receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education and Health Education. The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. Schools must make provision for Health Education.

- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)

### **Why is Relationships and Health Education needed?**

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. This is why the Government have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England.

In primary schools, ensuring the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online are embedded. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents/carers is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

### **What is compulsory in primary schools?**

The Relationships Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools.

The content set out in this guidance covers everything that primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on Sex Education to meet the needs of their pupils.

### **Relationships and Health Education objectives**

Effective relationship and health education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. We believe that RHE should not be delivered in isolation. It should be firmly rooted within the entire curriculum, including citizenship and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education); these lie at the heart of our policy to raise standards and expectations for all pupils.

We aim to help pupils develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives. The objective of Relationships and Health Education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. A successful programme, including PSHE, helps young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood by preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

## **What is Relationships and Health Education?**

'It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.'

(Sex and Relationship Education Guidance)

## **Why teach Relationships and Health Education?**

The main aims for teaching RHE in a Primary School:

- To enable young people to understand and respect their bodies, and be able to cope with the changes puberty brings, without fear or confusion; learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages; understanding human sexuality, reproduction, emotions and relationships.
- To help young people develop positive and healthy relationships appropriate to their age, development etc. (respect for self and others).
- To support young people to have positive self-esteem and body image, and to understand the influences and pressures around them.
- To empower them to be safe and safeguarded; learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- To make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.

## **Openness with parents/carers and other stakeholders**

We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with our parents/carers through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. We aim to respond sensitively and promptly to any comments or questions from parents/carers as and when they arise. We take seriously any issue that parents/carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RHE in the school.

## **Implementation**

### **Planning and resources**

Our school's RHE curriculum is adopted from the Sheffield Local Authority – this was produced and then followed by a city-wide consultation with faith and community groups. School has worked hard to adapt this recommended curriculum (produced by the Sheffield ILS eLearning Service) so that materials are more tailored to the age, needs and the physical and emotional maturity of our pupils.

In addition, our school works with BigTalk Education, an award-winning team of specialist RSE facilitators led by Lynnette Smith, who is the Chair of the Sex Education Forum's Advisory Group (the SEF is part of the National Children's Bureau). BigTalk Education's team will deliver the Growing Up Safe: Whole School Approach (GUS) programme to each class within school. Our teaching staff observe the BigTalk Education sessions as part of their CPD programme to ensure they can reinforce the lesson content and answer any follow up questions throughout the academic year. Parents/Carers are also invited to participate in workshops led by BigTalk Education prior to the sessions for pupils in school.

School is committed to ensuring that pupils are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and cultural background of the pupils concerned.

We also ensure that children are protected from accessing unsuitable materials on the internet and have rigorous filtering systems in place in school. Children also learn about online safety as part of their computing curriculum and this helps to further ensure they remain safe online both in and outside school. The school and parents/carers use resources from the National Online Safety Network (<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>) to support learning around online safety and safeguarding of children online.

## **Parental responsibilities**

Parents'/Carers' role in the development of their child's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents'/Carers are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

Parents'/Carers have the right to withdraw their child from some or all elements of Sex Education provided in Year 5 and 6 at school except for those parts included in the statutory curriculum.

## **The role of the subject leader**

The role of the RHE subject leader is to:

- Be a role model and expert in the subject.
- Provide a lead and direction for RHE through school.
- Support and advise colleagues.
- Audit and manage physical resources.
- Keep up-to-date with developments in RHE both locally and nationally.
- Review the way RHE is taught and planned, and plan for improvement.
- Ensure progression and continuity in RHE through school.
- Work collaboratively within the locality of schools to develop and promote RHE.
- Report periodically to Governors (end of year reports).

## **The role of governors**

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body or management committee should also ensure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- The subject is well-led, effectively managed and well planned.
- The quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Clear information is provided for parents/carers on the subject content and the right to request that their child can be withdrawn from Relationship, Reproduction and Puberty Education.
- The subject is resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

## **Equality**

The governing body has wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010, to ensure that no pupil(s) are discriminated against because of their sex, gender, identity, sexual orientation, disability, educational needs, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin or home circumstances.

## **The role of the headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents/carers are informed about the school RHE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity. The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on its effectiveness.

## **The role of teaching staff**

The role of the teacher is to follow the school's RHE curriculum and ensure content is taught in line with policy and training.

If a child misses the compulsory lessons due to absence, teachers will ensure that the child has an opportunity to cover the content at a later date.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

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

## **Visitors**

Visitors – such as specialist facilitators from BigTalk Education – complement but never substitute or replace planned provision or teach anything that contradicts the content and the spirit of this policy. We will also offer children the opportunity to listen to other visiting speakers such as health workers, road safety, police and religious leaders, who we invite in to the school to talk about their role in creating a positive and supportive local community.

## **Confidentiality**

Teachers conduct RHE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, or indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse, this will be dealt with in line with our safeguarding policy.

## **Answering difficult questions**

Pupils are encouraged to ask questions during RHE lessons. Teachers will respond to questions that are age-appropriate for their pupils. Teachers will remind pupils that personal questions should not be asked. In some lessons, an anonymous question box may be used to allow children to ask questions about potentially embarrassing or sensitive topics. We will also encourage parents/carers to talk with school if they have any questions or queries, and if they would like advice on how to better support their child and continue learning outside the classroom. If a child asks an explicit or difficult question, staff will work with parents/carers to support the pupil. This may be through individual work, discussion with the pupils and parents/carers. If the staff member is concerned, they can refer to the safeguarding team.

## **Parental rights and procedures for withdrawal of pupils**

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their child from Sex Education lessons but not statutory science lessons or statutory relationships education. If a parent/carer should wish to withdraw their child from the non-statutory Sex Education lesson, a request should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

## **Children with SEND**

Relationships Education and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. We ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Teachers will use a range of strategies to help all pupils engage in the teaching and learning that may include, small group or individual lessons, additional time, specialist resources or adapting resources to enable access. For more able pupils, teachers will provide additional opportunities to take responsibility, develop leadership skills, think creatively and use their talents for the good of the class or wider community.

## **Assessment**

Pupils will have the opportunity to reflect on their learning within lessons and at the end of each unit. In addition to the pupils' self-assessment, teachers will assess through informal methods such as observations and class or group discussions. Observations may have a particular focus (e.g. children's listening skills).

## **Early years foundation stage (EYFS)**

School relates the RHE aspects of the curriculum to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Curriculum. EYFS follows the Development Matters curriculum which develops a child's personal, emotional and social development; this also includes the use of the NSPCC Talk PANTS resources.

## **Development of the policy**

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

- Review: the senior leadership team (SLT) and curriculum leader pulled together all the relevant information including national and local guidance.
- Staff Consultation: all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
- Governor consultation: governors were briefed on the draft policy and curriculum and given a period of time to consult and feedback.
- Review: recommendations from teaching staff and governors were considered and updates to the policy and curriculum implemented prior to parental consultation.
- Parent/Carer consultation: all families given the opportunity to look at the draft policy and curriculum overviews and make recommendations.
- Ratification: after consideration of feedback from parents/carers, the policy will be finalised and shared with governors for ratification.

## **Monitoring and evaluating the policy**

Teacher assessment will inform discussion about the successful implementation of the policy. Judgements about the success of the policy can also be made through gathering evidence from school staff about how the policy supports them, from parents/carers and governors about the clarity of the information provided, and from pupils about how RHE provision is meeting their needs.

Monitoring the standards of children's work, planning and quality of teaching in RHE is the responsibility of the subject leader and the SLT. Evaluations will be carried out periodically over the year along with lesson observations.

This RHE policy represents a statement of a whole-school commitment to the teaching of relationships and health education and will be reviewed annually.

**Statutory elements of the curriculum outlined by the Department for Education**

**Relationships Education (Primary)**

By the end of primary school:

<b>Families and people who care for me</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.</li> <li>• how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Caring friendships</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.</li> <li>• the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.</li> <li>• that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Respectful relationships</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li> <li>• the conventions of courtesy and manners.</li> <li>• the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.</li> <li>• the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.</li> </ul>
<b>Online</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p>

<b>relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.</li> <li>• how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.</li> <li>• how information and data is shared and used online.</li> </ul>
<b>Being safe</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.</li> <li>• how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.</li> <li>• how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.</li> <li>• how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.</li> <li>• how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.</li> <li>• where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.</li> </ul>

### Physical health and mental wellbeing: Primary

The focus in primary school should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

This starts with pupils being taught about the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and giving pupils the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions that everyone experiences. This should enable pupils to articulate how they are feeling, develop the language to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate for the situations that they experience.

By the end of primary school:

<b>Mental wellbeing</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.</li> <li>• 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. 33</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.</li> <li>• the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.</li> <li>• simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.</li> <li>• isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.</li> <li>• that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Internet safety and harms</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.</li> <li>• where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical health and fitness</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).</li> <li>• how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy eating</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).</li> <li>• the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>
<b>Drugs, alcohol and tobacco</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.</li> </ul>
<b>Health and prevention</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.</li> <li>• about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.</li> <li>• the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.</li> <li>• about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. In nursery children will be taught how to brush their teeth.</li> <li>• about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.</li> <li>• the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.</li> </ul>

<b>Basic first aid</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.</li><li>• concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.</li></ul>
<b>Changing adolescent body</b>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.</li><li>• about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.</li></ul>

**Parents'/Carers' right to withdraw**

Parents/Carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents/Carers do have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of Sex Education within RHE.

Specifically, this means parents may choose to withdraw their children from the non-statutory aspects of the Year 5 and 6 RHE curriculum. Resources for this lesson can be made available for parents/carers to view in order to support their decision making process.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form below and addressed to the headteacher. Alternative work will be given to pupils who withdraw from Sex Education.

<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/CARER</b>			
<b>Name of child</b>		<b>Class</b>	
<b>Name of parent/carer</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Reason for withdrawing from Sex Education within Relationships and Health Education</b>			
<b>Any other information you would like the school to consider</b>			
<b>Parent/Carer signature</b>			
<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL</b>			
<b>Agreed actions from discussion with parent/carer</b>			
<b>Headteacher signature</b>			