



**The Westminster  
School**

*Safe, Happy and Learning Together*

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**2021/2022**

# **Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

Building foundations and providing opportunities to create confident, aspirational, and independent members of our community.

Approved by Governing Body on:	<b>03/02/2022</b>
Signed by Chair of Governors:	<b>Sue Gough</b>
Head Teacher:	<b>Mr O M Flowers/Miss P Cartwright</b>
Lead Personnel:	<b>O Flowers</b>
Date of Review:	<b>03/02/2023</b>

This policy was developed in response to the statutory guidance from the Department for Education (2019), Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

## Rationale

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.

'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.'

(Department for Education, 2019: p8)

Young people with learning difficulties have increased vulnerability to exploitation. It is therefore vital that we teach our children and young people how to recognise and deal with problems they may face both now and in their futures.

## What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of healthy relationships, in their various guises, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

RSE equips young people with essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline. It involves acquiring information, knowing the law, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

The term relationships and sex education (RSE) is used in this policy to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage and maintain relationships.

## Principles and Values

At The Westminster School we believe that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Encourage every student to contribute to our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- Be set within the wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just

one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches.

- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure.
- The important values are love, respect and care for each other.
- Aim to present topics neutrally and without judgment. Pupils with SEND must not be made to feel ashamed of their sexual needs and desires.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them about the content of programmes and sharing resources wherever possible. Additional information for parents is included towards the end of this policy.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.
- We support students to discuss and be aware of genders and gender identification.

## Aims of RSE at TWS

We aim to enable our children and young people to build safe, healthy and meaningful relationships that are well managed and maintained. We hope to do so by providing balanced, factual and non-biased information about relationships, reproduction and wider contexts including emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions for a range of topics. Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- Develop awareness of emotions and how they relate to behaviour of self and others.
- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- Develop awareness of the differing nature and levels of relationships and the codes of conduct relating to them.
- Develop an awareness of different 'life choices' with regard to transitions from school and home in relation to the development of relationships as part of a wider context.
- Develop awareness of the physical self, how it functions and how changes occur over time.
- Develop practical strategies for self-management of body actions such as menstruation, puberty and related physical changes.
- Develop understanding of how physical changes can affect emotional responses (female & male hormonal changes) and to help pupils to self-manage these.
- Develop awareness of codes of conduct governing sexual expression & sexuality, particularly in relation to understanding the concepts and implications of 'public' & 'private' behaviours.
- Help pupils to develop strategies for 'keeping safe' and for protecting themselves against exploitation or abuse.



- Have an understanding of the physical aspects of reproduction, contraception and sexual health as appropriate to age and cognitive ability of the individual pupil.
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
- Develop awareness of themselves including their core beliefs and values, sexuality and opinions.
- Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- Know how the law applies to a range of topic including alcohol, drugs, sex and consent.
- To develop an understanding of how social networks/media portray body image and sexuality.
- To develop knowledge of responses to peer pressure.

## Consultation and Engagement in RSE at TWS

The Westminster School recognises that the development of an appropriate curriculum requires consultation and engagement from *all* involved. 'To maximise generalisation of knowledge, it is also useful for the curriculum to include strategies that foster collaboration between educators and caregivers (Blanchett, 2002: p16). We have therefore provided recent opportunities for our young people, parents and carers and the staff body to put forwards their suggestions about what the RSE curriculum should include.

Some of our young people recently engaged in a focus group which allowed them to freely discuss their thoughts and opinions. One example included how pupils felt about the education they have received about puberty and menstruation, and how prepared they felt for these significant life changes. The information that focus groups like this produce is shared amongst staff so that teaching priorities can be reviewed and updated. We recognise that obtaining, and most importantly listening to, pupil voice is crucial in moving the RSE curriculum forwards.

Parents and carers were recently given the opportunity to attend a virtual RSE event as well as a face-to-face drop in at our annual Meet the Teacher event. Information was also collected from parents via an electronic Google Form. In these communications it was emphasised that we aim to work collaboratively with parents and carers to ensure a consistent approach. We strive to achieve this with regular and open communication and by sharing our practice and resources. Some parents have also taken part in a focus group with our Education Psychologists. The findings of the above presented the concerns that caregivers have about the vulnerability of our children and young people and that explicit teaching in this area is paramount.

Staff have recently taken part in RSE consultation and training. Similar sessions feature throughout the school year to ensure that staff feel confident in the planning and delivery of a range of RSE topics.

## A Personalised Approach

As a result of consultation, a specialised programme of RSE has been developed within The Westminster School. All teachers have a copy of the whole school RSE framework and access [Policies and Procedures](#)

to recommended resources for teaching. The programmes of study are adapted and personalised appropriately to meet the needs of each student.

Due to the considerable diversity that exists between pupils at The Westminster School, we believe the most relevant aspects of the curriculum are covered based on the needs of the child or young person. For some pupils it will be appropriate to teach only the functional aspects of the curriculum that have relevance to the individuals concerned. For a minority of pupils, it is more appropriate to address specific areas of need as and when they occur and to continue to work on early development objectives at other times.

RSE interventions are also available and planned throughout the week for more focused and personalised sessions on a 1:1 basis for any pupils needing further support with a particular area of need. Staff can submit a support referral form if they have a particular RSE concern regarding a pupil. This can be a request from a parent/carer as a result of RSE concerns at home. Referrals are discussed in weekly Triage meetings to decide on the best action to support the pupil.

## Curriculum Intent, Implementation & Strategies

The Westminster School personalises provision for pupils in different curriculum pathways for their individual needs. Whilst some knowledge is taught in RSE lessons at least once a week, many skills are taught day in day out, mainly across the My Wellbeing Area of Learning (AOL). RSE is often evident in other AOL. These include My Communication, My Community, My Care and Independence, My Creativity and My Thinking Skills. This gives pupils the opportunity to embed new skills and apply their understanding to a range of contexts, including the local community, making learning more functional for their futures.

The language we use is vitally important in conveying messages to our young people. It is also crucial for safeguarding. We commit to the following:

- The use of inclusive language. Convey to pupils with SEND the message that their needs are important and they deserve to learn this material.
- Provide pupils with resources that are representative of a variety of SEND (and feature different ethnicities, sexes, and sexualities).
- Use medically/scientifically correct language to accurately describe human anatomy and the processes of the body.
- Provide a glossary that explains the terms used (including pictures) and lists alternative language such as slang.
- Use straightforward, explicit explanations and language. Avoid euphemisms – some pupils with SEND may not understand them.
- Reinforce explanations visually wherever possible.

The relationships we have and how they are managed are the foundation of our interactions with one another. Being able to recognise our emotions and have the resilience to manage them, will ensure that relationships can develop and our young people can flourish. This is an aspect that the staff body model in our daily practise.

We provide an interactive learning environment which is motivating, allowing pupils to practise skills and to embed new information and knowledge. Pupils are provided with exciting and

engaging opportunities to apply skills and knowledge to ensure learning is functional, purposeful and reflective. We have a range of RSE resources accessible to all pupils to further their understanding, engagement and independence in a range of areas.

Below is a table that provides an example of some of the key aspects taught in RSE. This content is selected based on pupils learning needs and their personalised targets. Pupils are only taught about sensitive topics when they and the members of staff who know them best feel that they are ready to cover this information appropriately and safely.

Learning Area	Foundation Knowledge	Deeper Knowledge
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Things we are good at</li> <li>- Kind and unkind behaviours</li> <li>- Playing and working together</li> <li>- People who are special to us</li> <li>- Getting on with others</li> <li>- Who am I? (Identity)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal strengths</li> <li>- Skills for learning</li> <li>- Prejudice and discrimination</li> <li>- Managing pressure</li> </ul>
Self-Care, Support and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Taking care of ourselves</li> <li>- Keeping safe</li> <li>- Trust</li> <li>- Keeping safe online</li> <li>- Public and Private</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feeling unwell</li> <li>- Feeling frightened/worried</li> <li>- Accidents and risk</li> <li>- Emergency situations</li> <li>- Gambling</li> </ul>
Managing Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognising emotions</li> <li>- Identifying and expressing feelings</li> <li>- Managing strong feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-esteem and unkind comments</li> <li>- Romantic feelings and sexual attraction</li> <li>- Expectations of relationships/abuse</li> </ul>
Changing and Growing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Baby to adult</li> <li>- Changes at puberty</li> <li>- Dealing with touch</li> <li>- Different types of relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Puberty</li> <li>- Positive/unhealthy relationships</li> <li>- Friendships</li> <li>- Intimate relationships, consent and contraception</li> <li>- Long-term relationships/parenthood</li> </ul>
Healthy Lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Healthy Eating</li> <li>- Taking care of physical health</li> <li>- Keeping well/wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elements of a healthy lifestyles</li> <li>- Mental wellbeing</li> <li>- Physical activity</li> <li>- Body image</li> <li>- Medicinal drugs</li> <li>- Drugs, alcohol &amp; tobacco</li> </ul>

The World I Live In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Respecting differences between people</li><li>- Jobs people do</li><li>- Rules and laws</li><li>- Taking care of the environment</li><li>- Belonging to a community</li><li>- Awareness of Money</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Human diversity</li><li>- Rights and responsibilities</li><li>- Managing online information</li><li>- Preparing for adulthood</li><li>- Managing finances</li></ul>
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These topics are carefully planned and taught at the appropriate time for them in their journey to adulthood. Deeper Knowledge outcomes are taught when pupils have gained some independence within the Foundation Knowledge outcomes.

## Monitoring and Evaluation of RSE

RSE evidence is captured and assessed in the same way as other curriculum areas. Please refer to the Assessment and Feedback policy for more information.

All form teachers and RSE teachers are responsible for planning and monitoring progress of pupils for RSE. It is the responsibility of the RSE Co-ordinator alongside SLT to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of RSE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

The Governors Curriculum Staffing and Resources Committee is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationship and Sex Education Policy. Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on the Quality of Education that pupils receive, as well as Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. This includes evaluating and commenting on the school's RSE policy, and on support and staff development, training and delivery. The Governor with responsibility for RSE is Sue Gough.

## Right to Withdraw

As Stated by the Department for Education in statutory guidance published June 2019, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from some, or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Please note, the right to withdraw is for sex education only and does not include content delivered as part of relationships and health education. If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child from any part of sex education, they need to contact school to have a discussion with the Head Teacher, so that he/she can be made aware of the reasons and provide alternative arrangements. The request to withdraw a child from sex education can be made up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should include the young person in sex education provision.

## Confidentiality and Child Protection

All staff members and external visitors, who work with our pupils, will be given a copy of this policy and our School's Child Protection Policy. Our School Nurse is guided by the Fraser Guidelines, which provide guidance for health professionals and details of these are provided

in the DfE document Sex and Relations Education (2000). Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

The Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will have a discussion with any health professional or other adult before they start to work with our children. This is to ensure they are familiar with our policy and expectations regarding correct practice and how to respond to issues, including those that may relate to Child Protection matters.

We make clear to pupils what our procedures are with regard to confidentiality. Similarly, if questions are asked in class or in assembly adults will follow agreed practice based on DfE Guidance 2000.

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents or Head Teacher of any disclosure unless the Head Teacher has specifically requested them to do so.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first. Pupils will be encouraged to allow teachers to liaise with parents with regard to issues that would benefit from being shared. Pupils will be informed in the eventuality that a confidence must be breached due to the seriousness of the disclosure.

Subjects of an intimate nature may prompt disclosures. Staff are given guidance as to the establishment procedures for dealing with disclosure. When working with more-able pupils, staff are made aware of the fact that disclosures may occasionally be made relating to sexual matters, self-harming /depression, acts of aggression or drugs misuse. Staff are instructed to liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead through recording concerns on Safeguard Software, and will be advised on the appropriate course of action.

Where appropriate, pupils will be given support to access counselling and therapeutic services that are skilled in dealing with individuals with ASD, or other specific learning difficulties.

## RSE Guidance for Parents

The following is based on guidance from Nasen (2022), Providing Relationships and Sex Education for Special Learners: An essential guide for developing RSE provision.

When working with your child:

- Laugh and enjoy the process. Laugh with each other and as a family. Sharing your embarrassments may mean they don't have to share theirs with others in the future.
- Listen and observe without judgement.
- Always respond. If you do not, they may think that it is wrong to talk to you about their thoughts in future. If you need some thinking time prepare an answer such as, 'shall we look this up together' or 'that's a great question, let me think about this and we will talk about it later.' Alternatively questions such as, 'what do you think' may be appropriate to give yourself some more thinking time. Where gesture is more appropriate ensure it is consistent and nurturing.
- Give simple, short and honest answers, appropriate for their level of understanding, without the fear or gore that adult conversations can sometimes include. This will help to develop an open atmosphere when questions are welcomed and informative.
- Always use the correct terminology. This is vital for safeguarding.



- Work with us. These conversations and subsequent work with our children can be challenging but we want to offer our help and support. We welcome any calls and questions you might have.

‘Effective RSE delays sexual activity, ensures children are safer and empowers them to make their own healthy choices about relationships’ (Jigsaw, 2018; PSHE Association, 2014).

## RSE Sources of Additional Information

Please follow the links below for further guidance and information.

Department for Education Statutory Guidance

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Mencap Guidance

[Relationships and Sex and Learning Disability | Mencap](#)

The National Autistic Society

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/family-life-and-relationships/sex-education>

Big Talk Education

<https://www.bigtalkeducation.co.uk/rse-information-and-support-for-schools/send-rse/>

Brook

[Brook – Healthy lives for young people](#)

The Sex Education Forum

<https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/>

The Lucy Faithful Foundation

<https://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/>

NSPCC

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/schools/relationships-health-and-sex-education-resources>

The following links are from American and Australian sources however they provide useful information, resources and regularly updated social media accounts.

Sex Positive Families

<https://sexpositivefamilies.com/>

Consent Parenting

[CONSENTParenting™ by AboutCONSENT™](#)

Amaze Parents

[Parents - amaze / USA](#)