

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

2025-26



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Policy development and purpose

West Lea's Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. 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 – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to contribute to a consultation about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

This policy helps ensure that the whole school community (pupils, parents/carers, staff, and governors) have a shared understanding of this important area of the curriculum. It is accessible to all stakeholders on the school website or by request.

As a school we value and nurture personal development and independence in our children and young people. The term Relationships and Sex Education, RSE, is used in this policy rather than Sex Education. This is 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 relationships.

Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

Statutory requirements

As a maintained all through Special School we need to be aware of requirements in both the primary and secondary sector.

In our primary phase we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

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

At West Lea School we teach RSE as set out in this policy adapted to the needs of our pupils.

In our secondary phase we must provide RSE to all pupils as per the Children and Social work act 2017.

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

Definition

Relationships and sex education is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about the physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per the West Lea curriculum policy but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Delivery of RSE

The Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school and we uphold it as an entitlement for all our pupils. We recognise the need to work as a whole school community to ensure a shared understanding of RSE and the under-pinning values and to deliver an effective programme that meets the needs of our pupils.

RSE is taught within our Personal Development curriculum which consists of the two subjects PHSE/RSE and Life & Work as well as a series of enrichment opportunities. For more information about curriculum coverage please see <https://westleaschool.co.uk/our-curriculum-overview/>

At Meridian Campus we cover a range of topics to develop children's understanding as part of our Personal Development curriculum. This includes families, friendships and relationships at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development. Relationships and health education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships as well as the knowledge and understanding about growing and changing bodies.

WE AIM TO:

- Develop moral understanding
- Encourage children to feel positive about themselves, develop confidence and self esteem
- Develop respect for others
- Encourage children to make positive choices
- Help children to develop healthy and respectful relationships (including caring friendships)
- Help children to understand how relationships are formed, maintained and sometimes ended
- Prepare children for change, physically and emotionally as they grow up including puberty

- Teach children about appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Help children stay safe online
- Help children to understand emotions and feelings other themselves and others
- Develop an awareness of family make up including same sex couples/parents, single parents, foster families, adoptive families, extended families
- Develop an understanding and acceptance of diversity

In the secondary phase, RSE is taught as part of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Relationships and Sex Education (PSHE/RSE) lessons. RSE 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

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure 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, 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).

Roles and responsibilities

THE GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Board will hold the head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Governing Board has delegated the approval of this policy to the policy committee.

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across their campus, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section [Parents right to withdraw](#)).

STAFF

Staff are responsible for:

- DELIVERING RSE IN A SENSITIVE WAY
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

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

PUPILS

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents' right to withdraw

In the primary phase parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in [Appendix 1](#) of this policy and addressed to the head teacher.

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

In the secondary phase parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE 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.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the Head of School.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Head of School will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

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

Training

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

The Head of School will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by our Heads of School through:

- planning scrutinies
- learning walks
- progress meetings

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed by our Heads of School every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Board policy committee and ratified by the Full Governing Board.

Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

| TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Name of child | | Class | |
| Name of parent | | Date | |
| Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education | | | |
| | | | |
| Any other information you would like the school to consider | | | |
| | | | |
| Parent signature | | | |

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL

Agreed actions from
discussion with parents



community
kindness
learning for life
innovation **inclusion**