

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Date Issued:	July 2024
Review Date:	September 2025

Changes made since last review:
Changed to annual review as recommended by The Key

Introduction

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is part of a lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. RSE is centred on personal safety, caring for others and building strong family relationships. This is coupled with teaching students about sexual health (including safe sex), and sexuality.

Effective relationship and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. RSE at Westfield Academy is intended to help students learn about relationships, emotions, sexuality and sexual health. We aim to present relevant facts in an objective and balanced manner. Lessons are set in the context of the family, friends and wider societal issues and address responsibilities that arise from within these relationships. RSE at Westfield Academy will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Under the Academies Act 2010 all schools must provide a balanced & broadly-based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

All maintained secondary schools must provide relationship and sex education (including education about sexually transmitted disease such as HIV and AIDS and child protection issues such as FGM and child sexual exploitation) and must teach human growth and reproduction as set out in the national curriculum. This is a statutory requirement.

Legislation

We are required to teach RSE as part of statutory guidance that states from September 2019, all schools must deliver relationships and sex education in secondary schools.

The parental right to withdraw pupils from RSE remains in primary and secondary education, for aspects of sex education which are not part of the Science curriculum.

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

Every Child Matters (ECM) & Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural

The delivery of RSE at Westfield Academy is underpinned by the following moral and value statements:

- The delivery of RSE is factual, sensitive and balanced.
- RSE within the Academy promotes meaningful, loving, and healthy relationships.
- Whilst delivering RSE, staff will avoid the imposition of personal opinion. Instead they will stay focused on the social, moral, spiritual, health and education aspects of the topics.

Across the faiths, there is obviously some variation in attitudes and outlooks in regard to Relationships and Sex. Whilst such views are not necessarily shared by all, they must receive respect; the teaching of RSE at Westfield Academy is respectful of all cultural and religious differences. The teaching of RSE at Westfield Academy is in line with outcomes outlined within the ECM framework, specifically, “Be Healthy” & “Stay Safe”.

Parental rights and the curriculum

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from the RSE element of the National Science Curriculum. This is the biological aspect of human growth and reproduction.

Information on sex and relationships, skills development and values clarification are taught within PSHE.

Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from sex education provided within PSHE. If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from aspects of the RSE programme then they need to write a letter to the PSHE Lead or to the Headteacher stating their reasons for the request. Parents will be invited into the Academy to discuss their relevant concerns regarding the programme with the relevant teaching staff in the Academy and to view materials.

The legislation brought in through the Children and Social Work Act 2017 brought important changes in relation to parental rights to withdraw children from school RSE:

Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from relationships education in primary school or secondary school.

At secondary school level parents will be able to withdraw their child from sex education (other than the sex education which sits in the National Curriculum as part of science in maintained schools). **However, a child will also have a right to opt into sex education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16).**

The teaching of relationships, sex education

RSE will be taught across the curriculum but specifically in PSHE and science. Form tutors are responsible for teaching PSHE (form tutors are allowed to opt out of teaching RSE). Certain aspects of the programme will be taught by members of the social inclusion department and external professionals.

Safety and confidentiality

Staff are guided by the Fraser Guidelines*, which provide guidance for health and education professionals and details of these are provided in the DfE Sex and Relations Education (2000) guidance. We make it 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 are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue.

Teachers will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ms Hartley, and in her absence her deputy Ms Freeman or Mrs Shaw.

How are resources used with reasons for their selection?

RSE resources are chosen and checked for:

- Being inclusive – acknowledging the full spectrum of diversity in society;
- Positive, healthy and unbiased messages; and
- Age and understanding appropriateness.

How will Westfield Academy deal with sexually explicit questions?

Westfield Academy will:

- Allow individual staff to use their professional judgement as to answering questions in front of the whole class or individually taking into account safeguarding policy.
- Encourage learners to ask their parents / carers any question outside the planned programme.
- Set out clear ground rules regarding personal questions, which are agreed by staff beforehand.
- Have designated adults that learners know of to go to if they wish to talk.

What kind of language will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in RSE lessons?

Staff will:

- Use the correct terms for all body parts;
- Use clear, unequivocal language in an objective manner;
- Discuss what 'slang' words mean and say that some can be seen as offensive. Staff will use their judgement in discussion depending on the understanding and maturity level of learners.

What Ground Rules specific to RSE will Westfield Academy use?

- Respect will be shown at all times.
- The creation and agreement of ground rules will be completed as a class at the beginning of RSE lessons, facilitated by the teacher.

Monitoring & Evaluation of RSE

The curriculum development team plan and monitor the delivery of the RSE spiral programme and ensure that all aspects of RSE are covered as defined in government guidance, especially the National Curriculum for PSHE - "personal wellbeing". The programme is reviewed on an annual basis. Lessons are observed by the TLR1 team for the relevant year group as well as the PSHE Lead Teacher and students may be consulted on the delivery and effectiveness of the lessons. On occasion there are cross curricular days on RSE in Curriculum weeks.

RSE policy review date

As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy should be reviewed at least every 2 years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance.

Reference

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/gillick_wda61289.html

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/content.aspx?CategoryID=1182&ArticleID=1127>