

# Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Date Issued:	31 July 2025
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<b>Changes made since last review:</b>
Changed to annual review as recommended by The Key

## Introduction

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is an essential part of lifelong learning that supports students in understanding physical, moral and emotional development. It teaches students about the importance of healthy relationships, respect for others, consent, personal safety and sexual health. It promotes inclusion of all identities, including the LGBTQ+ community and diverse family structures, in line with the Equality Act (2010).

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.

## 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 (2024)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- 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 are legally required to deliver Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which includes education on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as HIV and AIDS, as well as safeguarding topics like female genital mutilation (FGM) and child sexual exploitation. Additionally, they must teach human growth and reproduction as part of the statutory Science curriculum.

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

The delivery of RSE at Westfield Academy is underpinned by the following moral and values-based principles:

- RSE is delivered in a way that is factual, age-appropriate, inclusive, sensitive and balanced.
- It promotes healthy, respectful, consensual and caring relationships across all contexts—familial, romantic, and peer-based.
- Staff delivering RSE do not promote personal opinions but focus on the educational, emotional, moral, spiritual and safeguarding dimensions of the subject matter.

Westfield Academy recognises and values the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and cultural traditions of its students. While perspectives on relationships and sex may differ across faiths and communities, all

views will be acknowledged respectfully, and RSE will be taught in a way that fosters understanding and inclusion whilst following statutory guidance.

The teaching of RSE is guided by statutory safeguarding principles and supports the Every Child Matters outcomes, particularly “Be Healthy” and “Stay Safe.”

## Parental rights and the curriculum

Parents cannot withdraw their child from the science curriculum, which includes the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction, as this is a statutory requirement.

However, some aspects of sex education delivered through PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education) are not statutory, and parents and carers do have the right to request withdrawal from these specific lessons. To do so, they should write to the PSHE Lead or Headteacher, outlining their reasons. Carers and parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss their concerns and to review the teaching materials.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced updated guidance on parental rights:

- Parents and carers cannot withdraw their child from relationships education in primary or secondary schools.
- Parents and carers can request withdrawal from sex education in secondary schools (excluding the statutory science content).
- From the age of 15 (three terms before turning 16), students have the legal right to opt into sex education, even if previously withdrawn by a carer or parent.

## The teaching of relationships, sex education

RSE is delivered across the curriculum, with core content taught primarily through PSHE and science. Form tutors are responsible for delivering the standard PSHE programme, while specialist topics within RSE may be led by external professionals, ensuring expert input and consistent, high-quality provision.

PSHE lessons, including RSE content, take place during Period 1 every second Monday, providing a regular, structured approach across all year groups.

## Safety and confidentiality

Staff follow the Fraser Guidelines, which provide essential advice for health and education professionals on confidentiality and consent. Details of these guidelines are outlined in the DfE’s Sex and Relationships Education guidance (2000). Pupils are informed clearly about the school’s confidentiality procedures.

When questions arise during lessons or assemblies, staff adhere to established practices based on DfE guidance to ensure appropriate and sensitive responses.

Staff understand that effective RSE, which helps pupils recognise appropriate and inappropriate relationships, may lead to disclosures of safeguarding concerns. In such cases, teachers will promptly consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Ms Hartley, or in her absence, her deputies, Ms Freeman or Mrs Shaw, to ensure the child’s safety and welfare.

## How are resources used with reasons for their selection?

RSE resources are carefully selected to ensure they are:

- Inclusive, reflecting the full spectrum of diversity within society;
- Positive, healthy, and unbiased in their messaging; and
- Appropriate for the age and developmental understanding of the students.

These resources are reviewed annually by the PSHE Lead in collaboration with the Head of Personal Development to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness. Feedback from staff and students is also important to inform resource updates.

## How will Westfield Academy deal with sexually explicit questions?

At Westfield Academy, we will:

- Support staff to use their professional judgment when deciding whether to answer questions publicly or individually, always considering safeguarding policies.
- Encourage students to discuss any questions beyond the curriculum with their parents or carers. Establish clear ground rules around personal questions, agreed upon by staff before lessons begin.
- Ensure students know which designated adults they can approach if they wish to talk privately.

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

**Staff will:**

- Use the correct anatomical terms for all body parts;
- Communicate using clear, objective, and unambiguous language;
- Explain the meanings of slang terms, noting that some may be offensive, while exercising professional judgment based on learners' age and maturity.

## What Ground Rules specific to RSE will Westfield Academy use?

- Respect is expected from everyone present at all times.
- At the beginning of every lesson, teachers will review the "Rules of Engagement", with both students and staff encouraged to contribute additional guidelines as needed.

## Monitoring & Evaluation of RSE

The PHSE Lead oversees the planning and delivery of the RSE spiral programme, ensuring alignment with current government guidance. The programme is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and responsive to students' needs. Quality assurance is carried out by the PSHE Lead and Head of Personal Development.

Monitoring includes:

- Learning walks in all PSHE classes
- Regular check-ins via staff briefings, Google Classroom, and one-to-one emails with delivery staff
- Student and staff feedback, gathered systematically to inform improvements
- Ongoing reflection by teaching staff on lesson content, delivery methods, and student engagement

This continuous cycle of review, feedback, and self-evaluation ensures the RSE provision is of high quality and evolves to meet the needs of our learners.

## RSE policy review date

As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy is reviewed annually to ensure it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff, and parents, and remains in line with the latest Department for Education guidance and statutory requirements.

## Reference

[http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/gillick\\_wda61289.html](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/gillick_wda61289.html)

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