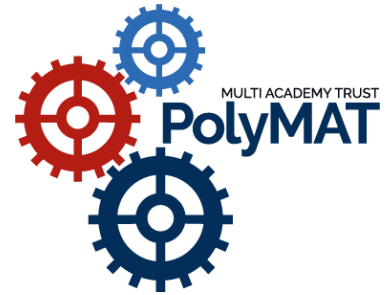




Woolwich Polytechnic
School for Girls



WOOLWICH POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Sex and Relationships Policy

Reviewed September 2023
Approved: December 2023
Revision due: December 2024

Sex and relationship education is a 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 orientation or sexual activity.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 includes legislation on Relationships and Sex Education in schools. This policy sets out how the school meets the subsequent, statutory requirements of the Department For Education, '*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education*' June 2019.

Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (*referred to in this policy as RSHE*) are complementary school subjects that help children and young people to understand the emotional, physical and social aspects of growing up and relationships. RSHE involves lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life and so it is taught in every year group in the school, in a way that reflects the developmental level of the learner.

The over-arching aim of RSHE is to help children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to become healthy, happy, safe, confident, respectful and responsible citizens – both now and in the future.

It has three main elements:

1. attitudes and values

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children;
- learning the value of respect, love and care;
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

• Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- Managing conflict; and
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- Knowledge and understanding
- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

The DfE recommends that sex and relationship education is delivered through the PHSE and Citizenship framework.

The Aims of Sex and Relationships Education

Based on the above definition the aims of SRE in this school are:

- To enable our pupils to better understand the nature of human relationships;
- To enable pupils to see the importance of stable loving relationships for the bringing up of children;
- To prepare pupils for the changes that occur to their bodies, minds and emotions as a consequence of growth from childhood to adulthood.
- To enable pupils to make good, informed choices concerning relationships and healthy lifestyles.

Moral Dimension

The Academy recognises that it is a moral body in its own right. As part of the whole curriculum the Academy seeks to explore issues of right and wrong. The Academy recognises that SRE is fraught with certain difficulties and whilst it acknowledges different life style choices it promotes a view that stable loving relationships are the best context for sexual relationships and for the bringing-up of children.

Content of the school's SRE programme

At Woolwich Polytechnic school for Girls RSHE meets the requirements of the statutory elements of the National Curriculum, relating to: Science (Sex Education); Relationships Education and Health Education.

The knowledge, skills and attitudes/values taught in the following key stages are:

Key Stage 3

Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle

Pupils should be taught:

- to recognise the physical and emotional changes that take place at puberty and how to manage these changes in a positive way
- how to keep healthy and what influences health, including the media
- that good relationships and an appropriate balance between work, leisure and exercise can promote physical and mental health
- in a context of the importance of relationships, about human reproduction, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and high-risk behaviours including early sexual activity
- to recognise and manage risk and make safer choices about healthy lifestyles, different environments and travel
- to recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and well-being, and to develop effective ways of resisting pressures, including knowing when and where to get help

Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

Pupils should be taught:

- about the nature of friendship and how to make and keep friends
- to recognise some of the cultural norms in society, including the range of lifestyles and relationships
- the changing nature of, and pressure on, relationships with friends and family, and when and how to seek help
- about the role and importance of family relationships
- about the role and feelings of parents and carers and the value of family life
- to recognise that goodwill is essential to positive and constructive relationships
- to negotiate within relationships, recognising that actions have consequences, and when and how to make compromises
- to resist pressure to do wrong, to recognise when others need help and how to support them
- to communicate confidently with their peers and adults.

Key stage 4

Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle

Pupils should be taught:

- to think about the alternatives and long- and short-term consequences when making decisions about personal health
- to use assertiveness skills to resist unhelpful pressure
- about the health risks ... early sexual activity and pregnancy, ... and about safer choices they can make
- in the context of the importance of relationships, how different forms of contraception work, and where to get advice, in order to inform future choices
- to seek professional advice confidently and find information about health
- Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

Pupils should be taught:

- to be aware of exploitation in relationships
- to be able to talk about relationships and feelings
- to look at consent
- to deal with changing relationships in a positive way, showing goodwill to others and using strategies to resolve disagreements peacefully
- about the nature and importance of long term loving relationships for family life and bringing up children
- about the role and responsibilities of a parent, and the qualities of good parenting and its value to family life
- about the impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on families and how to adapt to changing circumstances
- to know about the statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships in crisis
- To learn and understand about the practice of FGM

Although RSHE is a subject in its own right, it is always taught within the context of other learning. Where applicable in the curriculum, it is complemented by teaching and learning in other subjects, such as RE.

A core element of RSHE is about understanding and managing our mental health and wellbeing. Throughout the curriculum, pupils are taught about managing feelings and developing positive attributes, such as self-confidence and resilience.

All pupils, including those with SEND, have a right to effective RSHE. Different pupils' needs are taken into account when teaching RSHE. This may require adjustments to the curriculum or how it is accessed for some pupils e.g. use of specific IT equipment, small group work, TA support or differentiated activities.

Organisation

- SRE should not be delivered in isolation but firmly embedded in all curriculum areas, including Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE). At Woolwich Polytechnic School the *main* content is delivered within PSHEE during Personal Development lessons to tutor groups.
- SRE is normally delivered by the form tutor
- External agencies helping us to deliver SRE in our school include: the school nurse, the Greenwich Primary Care School Sex and Relationships Education Coordinator and the Greenwich Young Men's Project Officer (Sexual Health), The Big Fish Theatre Company, The Metro Centre (voluntary sector agency which provides services for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in South-East London.) (Delivering training, providing information, assisting and supporting the delivery of SRE relating to sexuality.)
- Visitors are invited in to school because of the particular expertise or contribution they are able to make to the SRE programme
- All visitors are **familiar with and understand** the school's SRE policy and work within it;
- All input to SRE lessons is **part of a planned programme** and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance;
- All visitors are **supervised/supported** by a member of staff at all times;
- The input of visitors is **monitored and evaluated** by staff and pupils. This evaluation informs future planning.
- The school will liaise with the local primary school(s) in order to ensure that the programme for SRE is continuous at KS3).

Assessment and Evaluation

Elements of the sex education in the science curriculum are assessed formally. Assessment and evaluation of the SRE programme outside the science order is conducted using a variety of informal activities which have been built into the programme. This could include peer assessment and self assessment. Teachers delivering SRE should constantly evaluate their lessons to inform future planning. Students are provided with the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the subject. Teachers are given a week to prepare their and answers and can get guidance from the PSHE lead if needed.

Specific Issues within SRE

Withdrawal

Children **cannot** be withdrawn from Relationships Education or Health Education in primary or secondary education. This is to ensure that all children and young people learn about safe and healthy relationships, including online safety. This is seen as vitally important to any young person's development.

Parents may request to withdraw their children from any aspects of Sex Education that are *additional* to that covered by the science curriculum, which is mandatory. They may request to do this at any point, up to three terms before the child turns 16. Young people over this age, who wish to take part in the lessons, can do so.

If a parent/carer requests to withdraw their child from Sex Education, it is vital that the school talks their request through with them. Any parent/carer wishing to use the right to withdraw should always be directed to meet with the Head of School and RSE lead in school. It is important that this happens so that parents/carers are able to understand:

- what their child would be learning and why
- what aspects they can and cannot be withdrawn from
- what the risks are to the child of withdrawing them from the lessons (loss of learning, personal and social development, risk to safeguarding).

An open and honest discussion between parents/carers and the school can help to dispel any misunderstandings or concerns that the parents/carers might have.

It is also important that the views of the child are taken into consideration and schools should do this when reviewing RSE policy, for example by asking their school council what they think is important for them to learn about as they grow and how the school can help them understand how to be healthy, respectful and responsible citizens.

If, after discussion with parents/carers, it is agreed that a pupil will be withdrawn from any non-statutory Sex Education taking place then the schools will ensure that the pupil is occupied meaningfully during that time, with suitable and alternative learning provision. The Head of School will also ask the parents/carers how they will be ensuring that the pupil to be withdrawn is going to be supported at home, to ensure that they are able to take part in all other statutory RSHE taking place.

Confidentiality and Child Protection Issues

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. (Please read the Confidentiality Policy). If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the school's designated child protection co-ordinator who takes action as laid down in the Child Protection Policy. All staff know the identity of the member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues and liaise as appropriate.

The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

To help safeguard pupils, RSHE at this school follows the principles for effective RSHE set out by organisations such as the NSPCC, The Children's Society, The National Children's Bureau, the Sex Education Forum and Barnardo's. These principles state that effective RSHE:

- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the school nurse and other health and advice services, including reliable information online.
- Meets the needs of pupils with their diverse experiences - including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and about how they can contribute at home.

RSHE and Faith Perspectives

At Woolwich Polytechnic school for Girls, pupils of all faiths and those of no faith are treated equally and respectfully. In line with the DfE statutory guidance, RSHE is taught in a way that respects all views and which takes the backgrounds of the pupils into account. Primarily, RSHE is a subject dedicated to building pupil's empathy, self-worth, respect and values. Faith perspectives are included in the teaching and learning, where appropriate. However, RSHE is always taught within the context of the Equality Act 2010 and the school places RSHE at the forefront of its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Answering Difficult Questions

Staff are aware that views around SRE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all SRE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to draw their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.

Both formal and informal SRE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Child Protection Coordinator if they are concerned.

Woolwich Polytechnic School for Girls believes that SRE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.

Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents (as appropriate) on this issue to reassure them of the content and context.

Dissemination

All staff members, Local Academy Committee members and parents should have access to a copy of the SRE policy. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies of the SRE policy are available from the school office on request from parents.

Woolwich Polytechnic School believes in the importance of appropriate staff training to enable staff to deliver effective SRE. The coordinator will access courses or INSET opportunities to assist staff involved in the delivery of SRE.

The SRE/PSHEE Co-ordinator facilitates the gathering of policy feedback from parents, staff and pupils every two years.