

RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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To be updated as and when new advice and guidance is received.

Governors: **To be reviewed by the LGB annually**

"EVERYONE EXCELS EVERYDAY"

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1. AIMS

The aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at our academy are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare students for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Help students to **RESPECT** themselves and others, take **RESPONSIBILITY** for their actions within their relationships and build **RESILIENCE** to overcome problems when relationships break down.

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Hollingworth Academy must provide RSE to all its students, under Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

This policy and the Hollingworth Academy RSE Curriculum have been updated to comply with statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) '***Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, Headteachers, principals, Senior Leadership Teams, teachers***' which came into effect from September 2020 and is compulsory from the summer term 2021. This document clearly sets out the curriculum content that secondary schools must deliver on RSE and Health Education. It also contains information on what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which secondary schools must comply when teaching Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

All schools are public bodies. As such, they have obligations under the Equality Act 2010, including:

- a) A duty not to discriminate against the nine protected characteristics that are set out by the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).
- b) The Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:
 - i. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
 - ii. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don't;
- c) Foster good relations across all characteristics, and between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don't.

3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

To comply with compulsory requirements from the DfE, parents and carers of Hollingworth Academy students have been consulted in the development of this policy. On 1st March 2021, a draft of this policy and the RSE curriculum overview was published on the academy website and all parents/carers received a consultation letter and giving them a one-week window to respond to a consultation form linked via the website. All feedback was carefully reviewed and given weight and have led to clarification and development of points within this policy. To meet good practice recommendations from the DfE, Hollingworth Academy staff were also invited to respond to the consultation on this policy. Following the consultation process, this policy and our RSE curriculum was ratified by the Headteacher and the Governing Body.

As of February 2025, the Department for Education (DfE) is in the process of reviewing the statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE). The results of this consultation are expected to be published later in 2025. In the meantime, we are advised to continue following the current guidance, ensuring that their RSHE provision is accurate, balanced, and relevant to our students.

The contents of the Relationships & Sex Education curriculum will be made available to parents/carers on the Hollingworth Academy website. Our curriculum content will cover the required themes below as set out in ***Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers*** – see separate document “RSE Curriculum Mapping” for our curriculum overview in each year group.

- Family.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online and media.
- Being safe.
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

4. DEFINITION

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values, which respect differing religious and cultural beliefs.

The purpose of RSE is to protect students; RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. DELIVERY OF RSE

All students within the academy have equal access to Relationships & Sex Education. RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) curriculum at Key Stage 3 and personal, social, health, citizenship and religious education (PSHCRE) curriculum at Key Stage 4.

We took the initiative to rebrand PSHE as "RISE" to align with our behavior system (RISE Points and FALL Points), significantly raising the profile of the subject. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Lessons are planned and developed using evidence-based resources and facts and statistics used within lessons will be robustly checked on each cycle of delivery and maintained up to date.

Teachers and all those contributing to Relationships & Sex Education will work within an agreed framework as set out in this policy. Where appropriate, we will also work with externally trained healthcare professionals to ensure our curriculum reflects current best practice and for support in delivering stand-alone sex education sessions. Particular care will be taken to ensure that any external agencies used are appropriate, are in line with Hollingworth Academy's duties regarding political impartiality, and do not undermine fundamental British values.

Across all Key Stages, students will be supported with developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions.
- Recognising and assessing potential risks.
- Assertiveness.
- Seeking help and support when required.
- Informed decision-making.
- Self-respect and empathy for others.
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle.
- Managing conflict.
- Discussion and group work.
- Respecting the religious beliefs and cultural background of others.
- Embracing diversity.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body will approve the RSE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

6.2 THE HEADTEACHER

The Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for PSHCE are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from the sex education element of RSE (*see section 8*).

6.3 STAFF

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE lessons in context in an unbiased and sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE.
- Ensuring the progress of students within their class(es) through the curriculum as detailed in the curriculum maps.

- Responding to the needs of individual students.
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the sex education element components of RSE.
- The first aider is engaged to support staff with aspects of RSE and liaise with the Head of KS3 PSHCE and the Head of KS4 PSHCRE to maintain up to date resources and information.
- 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 Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for PSHCE.

6.4 STUDENTS

- Students are expected to engage fully in RSE.
- When discussing issues related to RSE, all students are expected to treat others with respect and sensitivity, particularly where they do not hold the same opinion or belief.

7. SEND STUDENTS

SEND students follow the same RSE programme as all other students. When appropriate, and to ensure that the RSE Curriculum is accessible for all students, teaching will be differentiated, and content will be adapted to meet the needs of SEND students. This will be done on a case-by-case basis, through collaboration between teaching staff, staff who specialise in teaching SEND students in general or work closely with particular SEND students and wider support systems as appropriate (e.g. parents or carers and specialist agencies).

When delivering RSE to SEND students, we will be mindful of:

- The SEND Code of Practice, which includes a set of outcomes on preparing students for adulthood.
- The additional vulnerability that SEND students can face, to exploitation, bullying and other issues.
- The possibility that elements of RSE may be particularly important for some SEND students, because of the nature of a condition or disability.
- The potential need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of SEND students at different developmental stages.

8. PARENTS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Up until three terms before the child's 16th birthday, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the sex education element of RSE.

After this point, it is the child's choice: If a child who is at least 15 years and 9 months old chooses to be taught the sex education components of the RSE Curriculum, Hollingworth Academy will take all reasonable efforts to ensure that they are.

“...given that young people are able to consent and engage in sexual activity at age 16, they should be able to access sex education before that point. We [Department for Education] recognise, however, that parents are the primary teachers of their children. That is why parents will be able to request that their child be withdrawn from the sex education element of RSE. The school should respect the parents’ request to withdraw the child, except in exceptional circumstances, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.” **Reference: DFE-00053-2019**

The sex education component of the RSE Curriculum are those areas covered in the “Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health” part of Appendix A – DFE requirements.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing, using the form in Appendix B, and addressed to the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for PSHCE (Mr A Harwood, 2022-2023). A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student’s educational record. The Assistant Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from RSE.

9. TRAINING

Meetings are planned for staff delivering the RSE curriculum on our professional learning and meeting schedule. Every half term, tutors are given a bespoke CPD for their year group. These meetings ensure that staff are up to date with RSE policy and good practice and have the knowledge and expertise to deliver the curriculum with confidence.

The RISE curriculum lead will also invite visitors from outside the academy, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the RISE Curriculum Lead, through:

- Planning the RSE curriculum and distributing this to staff.
- Learning walks to support the delivery of RSE.
- Student feedback to RISE Curriculum Lead about RSE delivery and content during student voice.
- Staff feedback to the RISE Curriculum Lead PSHCRE during department meetings.
- Students’ development in RSE is monitored by class teachers.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the RISE Curriculum Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Sub-Committee.

11. RAISING CONCERNS ABOUT THIS POLICY OR THE RSE CURRICULUM

Concerns about the delivery of the RSE Curriculum in this policy will be considered in line with the Hollingworth Academy Complaints Policy.

Before deciding whether to make a complaint, parents/carers are kindly asked to consider:

- a. This policy.
- b. The extent to which parents, carers, staff and students were consulted or engaged in the development of this policy and the Hollingworth Academy RSE Curriculum (see Section 3 of this policy).
- c. Whether the complaint would be an appropriate, fair or meaningful use of resources at Hollingworth Academy (complaints to “vent” about the DfE’s decision to make certain aspects of RSE compulsory will not meet these criteria – see below).
- d. If Hollingworth Academy is the correct organisation to complain to. The DfE requires schools to teach students about the areas of RSE in Appendix A to this policy. Hollingworth Academy is not placed to handle complaints about the scope and content of the national curriculum – these should be directed to the DfE or local government. Hollingworth Academy can only handle complaints about its interpretation and delivery of that curriculum.
- e. The reason for and nature of their complaint. Complaints will not be considered if they are based on prejudice or a desire to discriminate against a particular group. If a complaint of this nature is made, appropriate action will be taken to prevent the discriminatory or prejudiced views of the complainant from having a negative impact on the Hollingworth Academy community and its values of equality, dignity and respect.

For example, whilst Hollingworth Academy may consider complaints about when and how it teaches about sensitive issues, such as birth control or LGBT relationships, Hollingworth Academy will not consider complaints about whether or not those issues should be taught at all. The DfE requires all schools to teach them and doing so is in line with Hollingworth Academy’s values and obligations as an organization.

APPENDIX A: DFE REQUIREMENTS - By the end of secondary school students should know

See additional RSE Mapping Document for coverage of the sub-topics.

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships. • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children. • What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony. • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into. • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships. • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting. • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: Judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship. • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs. • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control. • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable. • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.
Online and media	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them. • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. • The impact of viewing harmful content. • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners. • That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail. • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one- to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship. • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women. • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others. • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available. • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help). • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing. • About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour. • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

APPENDIX B: 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/Carer signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE ACADEMY	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	<i>Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken. Eg: Student X will be taking part in all relationship's lessons and during the sex education lessons, he/she will be working independently on a project in the Year 7 classroom.</i>