

The Meadows School



PSHE & RSE Policy

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place ensuring that students access accurate, age and stage appropriate information to help them navigate relationships safely and respectfully.
- 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, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media.
- Teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during the school years and after.
- To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in relationships and society.
- Support students' mental health and emotional well-being, helping them to understand their feelings and those of others.
- Create a positive culture and an inclusive environment that acknowledges, and respects diverse backgrounds and experiences related to relationships and sexuality.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Ensure all pupils are able to access their rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context of a consistent RSHE (Relationship, Sex and Health Education) both at school and at home. Through effective partnership, we can inform parents of when and what we are teaching so that they are ready to deal with any questions or issues that might arise because of their PSHE lessons.

2. Statutory requirements

The DfE's statutory requirements mean schools must teach Relationships Education to Primary pupils Relationships and Sex Education to Secondary pupils and Physical Health and Mental wellbeing to both Primary and Secondary pupils. The content of which can be found here:

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)

As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSHE to all pupils under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

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

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At The Meadows School, we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. 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/carers and any interested parties were invited to feedback on the policy during the consultation period.
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

4. Definitions and School Ethos

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

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. It goes beyond the provision of biological information; it focuses on attitudes and values, developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

For the Meadows school the principals of RSHE are family, friendship and safety. RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

We believe that relationships and sex education is important for our pupils and our school, as it will empower them to make informed choices regarding their wellbeing, health, and relationships, while also fostering their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into

practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.

We consider the partnership between home and school essential for delivering consistent RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) both in school and at home. By working closely together, we can keep parents informed about what and when we are teaching, ensuring they are prepared to address any questions or concerns that may arise from the PSHE lessons.

5. Curriculum

Our RSHE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHE education provision.

Our RSHE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary to meet the individual needs of our students.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with stakeholders and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils.

Our curriculum is structured to allow us to revisit key topics, ensuring that knowledge, skills, and understanding of essential areas are firmly established. It is also flexible, enabling us to respond to any issues that may arise throughout the year.

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online. We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

6. Delivery of RSHE

At The Meadows School we are committed to helping pupils understand the importance of loving and caring relationships and how to recognise and prevent abuse within relationships. The teaching and learning within this area, is designed to promote the development of our pupils into self-confident, healthy and responsible adults. Our RSHE curriculum can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by the pupils to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing so that they are able to form healthy and successful relationships.

Schemes of works have been carefully written so that teachers can adapt and implement them effectively across the whole school so that all pupils, regardless of ability, will receive high quality RSHE lessons.

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum.

RSHE 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

The Meadows School is also aware of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND Code of Practice and ensures that RSE teaching is differentiated, personalised and delivered in an accessible way.

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2. These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

6.1. Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed.

6.2 Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance.
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings.
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils.
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics.
- Fit into our curriculum plan.
- Are from credible sources.
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches.
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress.

7. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will:

Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:

- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with pupils' developmental stage

Comply with:

- This policy
 - The Teachers' standards
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Education Act 1996
 - Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
 - Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
 - Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lessons and that visitors understand how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy

Be clear on:

- What they're going to say
- Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people

- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We won't, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

8. Dealing with difficult questions

We will ensure a safe learning environment by promoting total inclusion and encouraging the freedom to express and the opportunity to be heard. Teachers and pupils will agree ground rules at the start of their block of learning. These rules will be visible and discussed at the start of lesson and referred to, when necessary, throughout.

Distancing techniques are strategies used to facilitate discussions about sensitive topics in a way that makes participants feel more comfortable and less personally exposed. Distancing techniques may include the use of scenarios, role-playing, anonymous questions, generalised discussion, use of media, fictional characters etc.

It is acknowledged that occasionally an individual student may ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. At the Meadows School, we have agreed that such questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed on an individual basis consulting with a member of the Senior leadership team/ SED Lead, for advice when appropriate. This approach is encouraged and accepted throughout school and also allows us to deal with sensitive issues in a collaborative and informed way.

When answering questions, the teacher will be sensitive to the age, developmental stage and emotional development of the child and not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate.

Pupils will be able to raise questions anonymously by using **question boxes** and other methods deemed suitable by the class teacher.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSHE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

9.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 9).

9.3 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/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science 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 headteacher. All teaching staff, including HLTAs at The Meadows School will be responsible for teaching RSE.

9.4 Pupils

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

10. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSHE 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 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action. Alternative schoolwork will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

11. Training

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

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

All members of the Senior Leadership Team as well as the SED Lead (PSHE Lead) have attended Designated Safeguarding Lead training.

12. Safeguarding

RSHE helps pupils understand the difference between safe and unsafe relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. It also teaches them about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and positive mental health, as well as about online and offline safety.

Teachers conduct RSHE lessons in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. All members of staff who deliver any of our Relationship or Sex Education Programme, have statutory training around safeguarding children and are all aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern. All staff involved in delivering and supporting RSHE should be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and are aware that they cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality to the child. If there is a concern about the child's safety, staff should follow the guidelines in the Safeguarding Policy adopted by the school.

We recognise that for children who may be vulnerable due to past or present abuse or changes in family situations, some learning units may need to be adapted due to the sensitive nature of the topics covered. The school will ensure that Schemes of Work may be adapted as appropriate to meet individual pupil needs in relation to their contextual circumstances.

For those pupils who may be considered vulnerable or at risk, teachers will liaise with the designated safeguarding lead and in his /her absence their deputy on the best approach for that pupil. Advanced warning of particular topics may be given to children and their families in order to support them in their learning.

As part of Relationships Education, pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns about potentially sensitive issues and speak to trusted adults. This includes processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer.

13. Engaging parents and other stakeholders

Parents and carers are informed about the RSE policy and any changes via school communication and the school website. We are committed to working with parents and carers to ensure they are fully aware of what is being taught by termly newsletters and messages. Letters are also sent home by those teachers who think that is more effective for their class. This allows us to put additional support and resources in place if necessary. Parents can see resources used to teach RSE during parent engagement visits or upon request to the school. We will encourage discussion of topics at home by sharing what is being taught each half term so that parents can be involved in their learning and are aware of the issues that we are tackling.

Governors are informed of the RSE policy annually when it is reviewed and through Quality of Education and Personal Development Presentations and Updates.

Pupil voice is used to review and tailor our RSE programmes to match the different needs to pupils and the issues that they feel are affecting them most. It is discussed at Student Council meetings and the feedback from these meetings is used to tailor lesson content and timing.

14. Monitoring arrangements

RSE provision and content will be monitored as part of the school's lesson observation cycle and teaching and learning monitoring procedures (e.g. planning scrutiny, learning walks, etc.) The Quality of Education Team are responsible for observing PSHE/RSHE lessons.

Pamela Meddings (SED Lead) will use Evidence for Learning and student assessment books and folders to monitor the delivery and impact of PSHE sessions.

Pupils' development in RSHE is also monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Pupil voice is influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities and will help inform any changes to our long-term plans.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Pamela Meddings (SED Lead). At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

15. Positive Touch Guidance

Positive touch is an important aspect of communication and emotional support. At the Meadows school, we recognise that appropriate and positive physical interactions (e.g. assistance with personal tasks) can enhance well-being and help build trusting relationships. It can be a means to support:

- Emotional well-being
- Communication and Trust
- Sensory stimulation
- Enhanced body awareness
- Social interaction
- Pain management
- Enable access and promote independence
- Promotion of Independence
- Enhanced mood and happiness
- Building positive relationships
- Calm and reassure
- Remove a child from danger or keep a child safe

General Principles:

- All touch interactions must be approached with respect, sensitivity, and cultural awareness.
- Consent for touch interactions will be sought whenever possible.
- Touch will be used as a tool for communication, comfort, and promoting well-being.

Personal Care and Hygiene (see intimate care guidelines):

- Personal care routines will be conducted in a private and respectful manner, acknowledging individual preferences and sensitivities.
- A consistent and familiar team of caregivers will be assigned to each learner to build trust and familiarity.
- Learners will be involved in personal care activities to the extent that they can, promoting independence and autonomy.

Putting Clothes On

- Dressing routines will be conducted in a manner that respects the dignity and privacy of the learner.
- The pace of dressing will be tailored to each learner's comfort level, allowing for breaks and adjustments as needed.

Massage:

- Consent will be obtained before each massage session, and any signs of discomfort will be immediately addressed.
- Individualized approaches will be utilised, considering the unique sensory needs and preferences of each learner.

Massage Communication:

- Clear communication techniques will be employed during massage sessions, ensuring learners are aware of what to expect.
- Non-verbal cues and alternative communication methods will be used to assess the learner's comfort level during the massage.
- Feedback from learners, as well as their responses and preferences in relation to the learners will be shared through the communication passport and PEN portraits, if there are specific considerations.

Lifting and Handling:

- Staff will receive proper training on lifting and handling techniques to ensure the safety and well-being of both the learner and the staff.
- The use of appropriate equipment, such as hoists and slings, will be prioritized to minimize the risk of injury during lifting and handling procedures.
- Individual care plans will be developed, detailing specific instructions for lifting and handling each learner based on their unique needs.

Medical Situations:

- In medical situations requiring touch, all interventions will be carried out with the utmost professionalism, respect, and sensitivity.
- Medical procedures will only be performed by trained medical professionals or individuals authorized to carry out such tasks.
- Parents or guardians will be informed and involved in decision-making processes regarding medical interventions whenever possible.

Monitoring and Review:

- Positive touch guidelines will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness and relevance to the learners' changing needs.
- Feedback from learners, parents, and staff will be actively sought and considered in the policy review process.