RSHE Policy

At Welholme Academy we are committed to providing a high-quality RSHE curriculum that supports pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to lead healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.

Our approach reflects statutory guidance and promotes:

- Positive relationships
- Respect and inclusion
- Physical and mental wellbeing
- Safeguarding and personal safety

This policy follows guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).

- **Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory** in primary schools
- **Sex Education is not compulsory**, but may be taught in upper Key Stage 2
- Parents **cannot withdraw** children from:
    - Relationships Education
    - Health Education
    - National Curriculum Science (including puberty and reproduction)

The aims of RSHE at our school are to:

- Support pupils to build **positive, respectful relationships**
- Help children understand how to **stay safe**, including online
- Promote **physical and mental wellbeing**
- Develop **self-respect, confidence and resilience**
- Provide age-appropriate knowledge about **health and development**
- Prepare pupils for the next stage of education

Guiding principles for our curriculum:

We develop our curriculum with the following key principles in mind:

a. **Engagement with pupils.** An inclusive and well-sequenced RSHE curriculum should be informed by meaningful engagement with pupils to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and engaging.

b. **Engagement and transparency with parents.** We engage with parents to inform them of the content of RSHE and are transparent with parents about all materials used in RSHE. All materials are available to parents. Parents have a right to request that their children are withdrawn from sex education. We ensure parents are aware of sex education content within lessons in advance.

c. **Positivity.** We focus on building positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships, including sexual relationships where relevant, and about health, including mental health. We avoid language which might normalise harmful behaviour among young people – for example gendered language which might normalise male violence or stigmatise boys.

d. **Careful sequencing.** We cover all statutory topics, recognising that young people can start developing healthy behaviour and relationship skills as soon as they start school. We sequence teaching so that pupils are supported and equipped with the knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, and to prevent harm.

e. **Relevant and responsive.** We develop the curriculum to be relevant, age and stage appropriate and accessible to pupils in our area, where appropriate working with local partners and other bodies to understand specific local issues and ensure needs are met.

f. **Skilled delivery of participative education.** The curriculum is delivered by school staff or external providers who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to create a safe and supportive environment. Staff are trained in safeguarding and offering support, recognising the increased possibility of disclosures.

g. **Whole school approach.** The curriculum is delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships, supported by other school policies, including behaviour and safeguarding policies.

Parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education:

To ensure that parents are well informed of what pupils will learn we share information about the school's curriculum via Class Dojo and our school website.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Before granting any request for withdrawal of a child from sex education, we discuss the request with parents to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This is likely to include discussing the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate. We maintain a record of any such requests.

If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, we provide purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their pupils from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

Everyone has relationships with others, and most pupils will develop sexual

relationships at some point in their lives. Relationships education should equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to act with kindness and respect in all their relationships as they grow into adulthood, to enjoy their relationships, and to keep themselves and others safe.

Relationships education focuses on how to form and sustain positive relationships but will also help children identify risks and harms. Relationships education may therefore include topics related to preventing sexual abuse, for example, or avoiding sharing inappropriate material online. This can be done without describing the detail of any sexual activity involved. Similarly, good safeguarding practice requires young people to understand the correct terms for different parts of the body and to be able to confidently use these terms. This can be provided as part of health education in primary, without describing any detail of sexual activity.

Our curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is designed around the following principles:

- **Inclusivity** – accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- **Age-appropriate sequencing** – building knowledge over time
- **Positive approach** – promoting healthy relationships and wellbeing
- **Safeguarding focus** – helping pupils recognise and report risks
- **Relevance** – adapted to pupils' needs and local context
- **Whole-school approach** – linked to behaviour and safeguarding policies

The focus for primary relationships education is on teaching the skills and knowledge that forms the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

We are sensitive to pupils' circumstances, recognising that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children, and can include single parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers. Teaching illustrates a wide range of family structures in a positive way, and we take care to ensure that children are not stigmatised based on their home circumstances.

Primary relationships education is anchored in an understanding of positive relationships but also equips children to keep themselves and others safe, and to recognise and report risks and abuse, including online. This is delivered by focusing on boundaries, privacy, and children's rights over their own bodies and personal information. We aim to ensure that pupils are able to recognise emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

Even very young children can be equipped to understand what counts as abusive

behaviour and to trust their instincts about behaviour that doesn't feel right. In addition, pupils should understand about bullying, and that this can include the use of derogatory terms relating to sex, race, disability or sexual orientation.

We teach pupils how to report concerns and seek advice. While teaching children how to stay safe, including online, we ensure pupils recognise that abuse is not their fault.

We ensure that children are introduced to protective and preventative content in a way that does not cause unreasonable alarm and does not appear to normalise risky behaviours or activities. Teaching is age appropriate and respectful of all children, including those who may have no familiarity with the topics under discussion. We will inform parents of any deviation from our published RSE policy in advance and share any relevant materials with them on request.

Curriculum content:

Our school uses Jigsaw as a basis for our curriculum. However, we consider the pupils in our own context and may include additional content that meets their needs.

Each of the aspects outlined below provides specific knowledge that is sequenced across the school to ensure that pupils build on their knowledge each year and are well prepared for their education in Key Stage 3.

The statutory guidance published by the DfE in July 2025 states that we **must** include the following content in our curriculum. This is outlined below and included within our curriculum.

Relationships education

Families and people who care for me

1. That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.

2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.

3. That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

4. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.

5. That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.

6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring Friendships

1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.

2. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships.

3. That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.

4. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.

5. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened.

6. How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.

7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.

Respectful, kind relationships

1. How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated.

2. The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults.

3. How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.

4. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs.

5. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.

6. Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships.

7. The conventions of courtesy and manners.

8. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.

9. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.

10. What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.

11. How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Online safety and awareness

1. That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.

2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.

3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.

4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.

5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.

6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online

Being safe

1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.

2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.

3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.

4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.

5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.

6. How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.

7. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Sex Education

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but we recommend that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and/or 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science. The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Schools may also cover human reproduction in the science curriculum, but where they do so, this should be in line with the factual description of conception in the science curriculum.

Primary schools should consult parents about the content of anything that will be taught within sex education. This process should include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school as well as advice about parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education.

Health and wellbeing

The aim of teaching about health and wellbeing is to enable pupils to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to understand the links between physical and mental health, to recognise when things are not right in their own health or the health of others and to seek support when needed. Schools should support pupils to develop strategies for self-regulation, perseverance and determination, even in the face of setbacks.

Effective teaching should aim to reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular relating to mental health, and discourage the pejorative use of language related to ill health. Schools should promote openness, so that pupils can check their understanding and seek any necessary help and advice.

Curriculum content related to puberty and menstruation should be complemented by sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation, including with requests for period products. Schools should use appropriate language such as period pads and menstrual products instead of sanitary items or feminine hygiene products. The Department for Education's Period Products Scheme is available for state- funded primary schools, secondary schools, and colleges in England.

Health education in primary starts with the benefits and importance of physical activity, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and supports pupils to develop emotional awareness. Schools should emphasise the relationships between physical health and mental wellbeing, and the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors.

General wellbeing

1. The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.

2. The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.

3. The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.

4. How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and

others' feelings.

5. How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.

6. That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.

7. That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.

8. That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.

9. Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).

10. That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.

Wellbeing online

1. That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.

2. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.

3. The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.

4. How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.

5. Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.

6. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.

7. How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.

8. That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.

9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.

10. That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.

11. Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical health and fitness

1. The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.

2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.

2. The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.

4. How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.

Health protection and prevention

1. How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.

2. About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.

3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.

4. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular check-ups at the dentist.

- Tooth brushing once a day for children who opt in.

5. About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.

6. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.

Personal safety

1. About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.

2. How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.

Basic First Aid

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.

2. Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments,
including head injuries.

Developing bodies

1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.

2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.

3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress

How we monitor and evaluate the curriculum

The curriculum will be monitored through the use of regular, termly learning walks, book looks and through pupil voice opportunities. These will be conducted across the school, from Nursery to Year 6, by the subject leader.

Teachers will use assessment for learning opportunities throughout lessons and record how each child has achieved for each topic.

We follow the Jigsaw planning scheme and supplement this with resources as necessary- such as fire safety for Bonfire Night and PANTS for KS1.

Further guidance:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender content

As above, pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect throughout their education.

We teach pupils about healthy loving relationships and include same-sex parents along with other family arrangements when discussing families.

We encourage our pupils to consider how to express their views while remaining respectful of the opinions of others. We make it clear that bullying or disrespectful language or behaviour is never appropriate.

We select resources carefully, to ensure they do not perpetuate stereotypes or encourage pupils to question their gender. We consult parents on the content of external resources on this topic in advance and make all materials available to them on request as set out in the section on openness with parents.

Religion and belief, including teaching in schools with a religious character

We ensure we consider the religious background of pupils, taking care to consider the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.

At times it may be relevant for us to teach about faith perspectives on these topics. Balanced debate may take place about issues that are contentious. For example, we may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex.

We make it clear to pupils when we are delivering content that reflects religious belief.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

All teaching is developed to ensure these subjects are accessible for pupils with SEND and prepare pupils for adulthood, as set out in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

We make adjustments in various ways. For example, lessons may be adjusted to accommodate various learning styles and extra adult support may be given as needed.

We are aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. RSHE can be particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.

Addressing sexual harassment and sexual violence

Relationships education has an important role in supporting young people to develop the skills they need to build healthy relationships and grow into kind and respectful adults. From early on in school, we support young children to develop skills for positive relationships, including skills for navigating boundaries with kindness and respect. We support our children to behave with respect and to understand and identify prejudice. Preventing sexual violence and abusive behaviour starts from this support.

We teach pupils to understand that anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or any other protected characteristic, and that the victim is never to blame. It is important to acknowledge that most sexual violence is committed against women and girls, and it often has a gendered component – for example, manifesting an inequality of power between men and women.
However, anyone can be affected by sexual violence and we avoid language which stigmatises boys or suggests that boys or men are always perpetrators or that girls or women are always victims.

Both within and beyond the classroom, staff are conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes, and take action to build a culture where prejudice is identified and tackled. Staff play an important role in modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes. We teach pupils to understand the importance of challenging harmful beliefs and attitudes and ensure they understand the links between sexism and misogyny and violence against women and girls. On the rare occasion misogynistic ideas are expressed at school, staff challenge the ideas, rather than the person expressing them.

Pupils have opportunities to develop positive conceptions of masculinity and femininity, including how to identify and learn from positive male role models. We ensure pupils understand that most boys and young men are respectful to girls and young women and each other.
Outside school, pupils may be exposed to online content which normalises harmful or violent sexual behaviours, which might include sexist and misogynistic influencers who normalise sexual harassment and abuse. Young people may be more vulnerable to this content when they have low self-esteem, are being bullied, or have other challenges in their lives.

We encourage pupils to consider how this content may be harmful to both men and women, while avoiding stigmatising or perpetuating harmful stereotypes about boys, and avoiding directly signposting to specific content and content producers.

It is important for pupils to understand that ethical behaviour in friendships and other relationships goes beyond respecting boundaries and consent, and that strong relationships of all types involve kindness and care. RSE lessons make it clear that all sexual activity should involve kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person and an awareness of the power dynamics that can exist within relationships.

RSE lessons ensure that both boys and girls have opportunities to practise respectful communication and understand experiences which are different from their own, including menstruation and menopause. Where necessary, we may make the decision to separate boys/ girls to provide a safe space to discuss key agendas in a 'safe space'.

Safeguarding

Discussions about sensitive topics in RSHE can lead to increased safeguarding reports. All staff know what to do if they have concerns that a pupil is being neglected or abused, including those who have seen, heard or experienced the effects of domestic abuse.

The Department publishes statutory safeguarding guidance *Keeping children safe in education* (KCSIE); this guidance provides a strong safeguarding framework and is clear on the actions a school or college should take if there are any concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing and/or safety. Staff are aware of mandatory reporting duties, including relating to FGM, and that virginity testing and hymenoplasty became illegal in 2022. The Government is also introducing a new law which will create a legal requirement for anyone in regulated activity relating to children in England, including teachers, to report if they are made aware a child is being sexually abused. Where lessons are delivered by external agencies, we agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by the external visitor.

If our staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they act on them immediately. Our safeguarding policy sets out the process staff follow when they have concerns about a child. Staff handle personal information with due care and know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. It is equally important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report, about themselves or a peer. We ensure that pupils understand where they can report any concerns and seek help, including to external services if they do not feel comfortable talking to school staff.

If staff have a concern about a risk of pupils experiencing or perpetrating harms, they follow our safeguarding policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). The designated safeguarding lead has knowledge of trusted, high-quality local support that could be engaged, links to the police and other agencies and awareness of local issues which it may be appropriate to address in lessons.

Managing difficult questions

Pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond any sex education covered by the school or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn.

Staff will:

- Answer appropriately and honestly
- Use age-appropriate language
- Avoid unnecessary detail
- Encourage pupils to speak with parents where appropriate
- Seek support if needed

Where necessary, teachers receive support and training in handling questions that are better not dealt with in the classroom.

Policy Development and Review

This policy has been developed:

- In consultation with staff, pupils and parents
- In line with DfE guidance

Date: 8.5.2026

Review Date: ?