WINDERMERE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1863

Statutory RSE Policy

Scope: Windermere School

Review date: September 2026

Author: Head of Life Skills Windermere School

Reviewer: SLT of Windermere School

Approval body: Board of Governors

Linked documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the

- Windermere School PSHE Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- SEND Policy
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education 2019

Acronym

RSE Relationships and Sex Education

Availability

This policy may be viewed on the School website, the staff shared area, and a printed copy is available upon request from the School Office.

Definition of RSE

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, 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. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity, sexual orientation, or a specific sexual identity.

Introduction and aims

This policy applies to all senior school students and forms part of the school curriculum.

At Windermere School, we recognise that effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is essential for the personal development and wellbeing of our students. Our aim is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life.

Our RSE programme is delivered in accordance with the statutory requirements, as set out in the 'The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Relationships Education is compulsory for all students receiving primary education, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory for all students receiving secondary education.

The aims of RSE at our school are to:

- Help students develop the knowledge and attributes they need to manage their lives, now and in the future, in terms of relationships,
- Help students prepare for life – and work – in modern Britain, developing knowledge, skills and attributes they need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society,
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place, and students feel comfortable asking questions,
- Give students an understanding of sexual development and the importance of sexual health and hygiene,
- Encourage students to understand the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships,
- Teach students how to form and maintain positive, respectful and healthy relationships
- Help students develop feelings of self- respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around sexuality and relationships,
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies,
- Help students understand that healthy relationships are an important part of wellbeing.

As students move through the school, RSE sessions help them to learn to respect the views of others, and to consider the needs and rights of other citizens. They clarify their opinions and attitudes in discussions with peers and informed adults and consider the consequences of potential decisions.

There are many choices to be made as students progress through school and the RSE programme aims to enable the students to make positive choices around sexual health and relationships.

We recognise the important role that parents/carers play in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents, carers, and students, consulting them about the content of the RSE programme.

Statutory requirements

Our policy follows the statutory guidance given by the government (DfE) and meets the requirements of the Windermere School Standards. As an Independent School, we must ensure that every registered pupil who is provided with primary education, is provided with relationship education, and every pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school, is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused through a parent's decision to opt out , in accordance with section 34 of Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Windermere School Standards, and guidance outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Policy development

- This policy is developed in consultation with the school community. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:
- Review – the Head of Life Skills review all relevant information, including but not limited to, relevant national and local guidance,
- The policy is drafted in accordance with up-to-date statutory guidance. The school curriculum plans are then amended accordingly,
- Parents and any interested parties within our community are annually invited to provide feedback on RSE through consultation when they are informed about the right to withdraw. Parents are asked to contact the Head of Life Skills. This feedback can be used to influence policy content,
- Pupil consultation – pupils are consulted about their RSE lessons in pupil voice box surveys, and within lessons,
- Ratification – once amendments are made, the policy is ratified and published to the school website
- Policy review – this policy will be reviewed every year.

Our RSE curriculum is age-appropriate, inclusive, and tailored to the maturity of our students in Years 7 –13. It is delivered primarily through PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education), but is supported through tutor time, school reflections, section briefings, cross-curricular links, and through the work of our pastoral team. We ensure that the curriculum:

- builds knowledge progressively across year groups.
- Reflects the law, including the Equality Act.
- Provides opportunities for discussion in a safe and supportive environment.

During students' academic career, broad topic areas covered in our RSE sessions include cover:

- Families
- Relationships online and the media
- Growing up: physical and mental changes
- Positive relationships and relationship values, knowing what healthy and respectful

- relationships look like, including within families, friendships and romantic relationships
- Forming, keeping and ending relationships
- Recognising pressure, persuasion and coercion and knowing how to respond to it
- Spotting unhealthy and abusive relationships, including the different types of abuse
- within relationships and the support available
- Bullying, grooming, exploitation, sexual harassment, and honour-based violence
- What is good communication?
- Dealing with conflict and standing up for yourself
- Understanding marriage, civil partnerships and long-term commitm ents
- Sexuality and gender identity
- Freedom and capacity to consent, understanding the effects of alcohol and drugs on consent, understanding the law and gauging readiness
- Contraception
- Sexual Health - preventing and treating STIs
- Fertility in men and women, and routes to parenthood
- Pregnancy outcomes, including miscarriages and abortion
- Family life: parenthood and caring
- The impact of pornography and unreal expectations
- The role of intimacy and pleasure
- Hormonal changes from puberty to menopause
- Choosing a good partner

We have developed a spiraling curriculum in consultation with resources from The PSHE Association, Cre8tive Education, and Life Lessons. We have consulted with our community, considering the age, needs and feelings of students. For more information about our curriculum, please contact the Head of Life Skills or the Deputy Head.

Delivery of RSE

The RSE course is delivered to all students through discrete Life Skills lessons, taught by a select number of teachers. It is an integral part of the wider curriculum.

Sessions are interactive, discussion-based, and supported by a range of resources which are tailored to the individual group. External speakers are invited to enrich the programme, under the supervision of school staff. All teaching is sensitive to the backgrounds and beliefs of all students.

RSE 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.

These areas of learning are taught using inclusive language within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, 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).

Sixth Form Curriculum Overview

Our Sixth Form curriculum is designed around several core themes, ensuring students develop holistically and are well-prepared for life's challenges and opportunities.

Relationships

- Relationship values: what kind of person do I want to be for and with others?
- Healthy family functioning: sharing with others
- Managing changing relationships: managing intimate relationships, maintaining old and developing new relationships
- Improving or ending relationships
- Consent and unhealthy relationships: deepening your understanding of consent
- Beyond consent – attuning to our needs and those of others
- Sexual assault and violence
- The power of the internet
- Earning respect, avoiding danger, pressure on young people to join gangs
- Sexism and online cultures

Wellbeing

- Knowing your rights – sexual and reproductive rights
- Online wellbeing – bias and extremism
- Responsible use of social media
- Media influence – identities and relationships
- Conversations about mental health
- Mental wellbeing
- Alcohol and drug misuse – parties and nights out

Independence

- Safety and first aid: personal safety – travelling in the UK and abroad, revising basic skills and deepening understanding
- Making choices about health and health prevention
- Making choices with friends and online: creating influence and volunteering

Aspiration and Money

- Making the most of the money we have
- How do people start their own business or charity?
- Careers in a global economy
- How to budget and save money
- What should I expect when I go to work?
- Finding work, interviews and reputation

Transition

- Moving out and moving to university: what next? Thinking about the future and leaving home, staying healthy

Identity

- Identities and inclusion: exploring discrimination and inclusion
- Exploring identities critically: norms, values and behaviour

Community

- Appreciating diversity
- Identity and power dynamics: exploring privilege

Body Awareness

- Connecting with body and emotions mindfully
- Looking after your body – healthy food and exercise
- Sexual health – condoms and stealthing
- Parenthood and fertility – discussing contraception and accessing emergency contraception
- Developing sexuality and readiness for sex
- Consent

Out of age (when necessary)

- Relationships at school with peers and staff
- Consent
- Additional safeguarding training
- Following the school rules
- Recognising the difference is age
- School rules and the law as an adult
- Measures to stay safe - boundaries with younger students.

Sixth Form Delivery

Our Sixth Form Life Skills programme is delivered through a blended approach that combines dedicated reflection and tutor time with integrated learning across the curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of Life Skills in liaison with the Deputy Head:

- Responsibility for the overview of this policy, however, all teaching staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on,
- Provides engaging lesson material,
- Ensuring that RSE is delivered consistently across their relevant section of the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSE,
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE.

The Head and the Deputy Head:

- Evaluating this policy,
- All students make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes,
- The subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned,
- The quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation,
- Teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all students with SEND,
- Clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- The subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

Teaching Staff (the Life Skills team):

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE.
- Using inclusive language.
- Monitoring progress, which includes completing assessments and recording effort grades
- Responding to the needs of individual students.
- Completing relevant and up to date training
- Ensure students are made aware of helpful external agencies.
- Be unbiased in their delivery of the topics covered and do not indoctrinate students. For example, teachers should not aim to influence the political or religious views of the students.
- Challenge and record any inappropriate language of radical views that are disclosed in the sessions.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE, but if they feel uncomfortable with a specific topic due to personal reasons, the Head of Life Skills will find a suitable member

of the pastoral team to cover those specific lessons. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Head of Life Skills.

Students:

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

Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Our curriculum is inclusive and RSE is accessible for all students. For those students with special educational needs or specific learning difficulties, the school has a well-established Learning Support department led by a SENCO. Students can use their own device and OneNote in RSE lessons to help with accessibility. All tutors are aware of the provision on the SEN register and students are supported at an individual level.

Further details of this provision can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some students; for example, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors will be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.

Parental Engagement and Right to Withdraw

We work in partnership with parents to ensure the curriculum reflects our shared values and the needs of our students.

If parents require more information on RSE for secondary-aged children, this is a useful source of information for them: RSE_secondary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf

Parents of senior students have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE (but not from relationships education) 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 Forms link provided here. A copy of the Forms link can be found in **Appendix 1** of this policy.

The Head of Life Skills along with the Deputy Head or Head of Safeguarding will discuss the request with parents in the first instance.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

An example of the information that parents will receive is as follows:

Next term students will be moving on to their RSE unit. RSE lessons include teaching about how to have fulfilling and healthy relationships, including friendships and intimate relationships, families, puberty, developing self-esteem, conflict resolution strategies, keeping safe and consent. Students will also have opportunities to ask questions that help prepare them for relationships of all kinds in the modern world.

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

However, the Relationships Education or Health Education content, and any content from the statutory Science curriculum is not covered by this opt-out. It is also important to note that from three terms before your child turns 16 (the legal age of sexual consent), if they themselves wish to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, they can opt back in.

Please be reassured that sessions have been designed in line with DofE recommendations and with support from the PSHE Association, Life Lessons and Cre8tive Education, to ensure that the content is sensitive, comprehensively planned, inclusive and age-appropriate. If you wish to withdraw your child from all or some of the lessons on sexual health and sex education, would you please complete the form by clicking on this link.

If students are removed, they will go to the Library and be set other Life Skills material to cover that their class teacher will provide feedback on.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Team through regular learning walks, and by the Head of Life Skills through curriculum development and sharing of best practice.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by the Life Skills teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. All senior school students are regularly given an 'Effort' grade.

The delivery of RSE is evaluated through:

- Gathering pupil views on RSE topics, delivery methods, and their understanding,
- The use of baseline and end- of-unit assessments for students to self-evaluate to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and confidence,
- The use of pupil presentations and in-class assessment for learning through a variety of activities,
- Teacher reflections through regular meetings,
- Collecting RSE teachers' views on lesson resources and delivery, and sharing best practice,
- Self-evaluation by staff teaching RSE to reflect on what worked well and what could be improved,
- Annual review of curriculum content to ensure alignment with statutory requirements and emerging issues (e.g.online safety, consent, harmful sexual behaviour) through school, local and national data.
- Parent feedback
- Using the Society of Heads networking group to evaluate what we do, compared to other, similar, schools
- Keeping up- to-date with RSE blogs and forums

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Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS

Name of child		Date
Name of tutor		
Name of parent		
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education		
Any other information you would like the school to consider		
Parent signature		

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL

Agreed actions from discussion with parents	
Staff signature	