

Penn Fields RSHE Policy 2024

Aims

The aims of Relationships, Sexual, Health Education (RSHE) at our school 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
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, including the importance of family for the care and support of children
- Help children to understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships
- To be able to recognise unsafe situations, protect themselves and ask for help and support

Penn Fields Special School considers that Relationships and Sexual Health Education (RSHE) is an integral part of the Personal, Social, Citizenship, Health and Economic (PSCHE) Education curriculum. We aim to offer students a carefully planned programme on human development, relationships, sexuality and family life within a safe, comfortable atmosphere and in a relaxed relationship between teacher and student. The programme is set within a moral framework and matched to the students' level of maturity. These aims complement those of the Science curriculum for all Key Stages.

Statutory requirements

As a special school we must provide relationships education to all students as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At Penn Fields School we will teach RSHE as set out in this policy. Should you like to see the guidance from the government please visit: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

Definition

RSHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, consent, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSHE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is embedded within our PSHE curriculum. We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education will be accessible for all students. High quality teaching is adapted and personalised, this is the starting point to ensure accessibility for all students. Staff will also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when preparing these subjects for students with SEND. Staff are aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education can also be a priority for some students, for example some with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs or learning disabilities. For some students there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meeting the specific needs of children at different development stages. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an age appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

As part of RSHE, students will be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children. They also need to understand that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside of marriage. Either of these can include heterosexual or same-sex relationships. We ensure that no stigma is placed on children based on their home circumstances. We aim to provide accurate information and to help to develop skills to enable them to understand differences and respect themselves and others.

We hope to prevent and remove prejudice. RSHE should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at school and within society, thus preparing them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We will work towards this aim in partnership with parents and carers. We carry out the main RSHE curriculum in PSHE lessons however we also teach RSHE through other subject areas e.g. Science, P. E., Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) and R.E., where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

Linked with RE, students reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved.

Linked with PE, students learn about healthy lifestyles and the importance of exercise. Since RSHE incorporates the development of self-esteem and relationships, students' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of school life including the playground.

Linked with PfA, students understand how to keep themselves safe as they grow up and develop further. They are also taught the knowledge and understanding they need to make informed choices when they are older.

It is important then that all staff understand they have a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are dealing with children. Science Curriculum Early Years Foundation Stage students learn about life cycles as well as watching chicks hatch. Through ongoing personal, social and emotional development, they develop the skills to form relationships and think about relationship with others.

In Key Stage 1 (years 1 – 2) students learn:

- The names of body parts.
- To recognise the importance of personal privacy, of respecting others' personal space, and that we are all custodians of our own bodies, and we should look after them and protect them.
- To know there are inappropriate ways of touching others which should not be tolerated, and even appropriate and non-threatening physical contact still requires consent from the person being cuddled.

- Different types of relationships.
- These lessons build important foundations for subsequent lessons in sex education when the students are ready.

Within Key Stage 2 (years 3 - 6) we acknowledge that many children will begin to experience puberty at this age. Alongside lessons with Nurse Jenna, our school nurse who covers public and private body parts, hygiene and puberty chats, staff will also teach:

- Parts of the body and how they work. We also explain what will happen to their bodies during puberty.
- We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it and there are opportunities for single-sex question sessions. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, and what menstruation is and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children. Relationships education also focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:
 - Families and people who care for me
 - Caring friendships
 - Respectful relationships
 - Online relationships
 - Being safe

These areas of learning are taught 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, LGBT 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).

In KS3, 4 and 5 the curriculum will be taught:

- To distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful;

- To understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect and to understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing;
- To believe they can achieve goals and that in order to achieve those goals they must stick at the tasks despite the challenges they may face.
- To be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way;
- To recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk;
- To recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and when to report issues to keep them safe online;
- To, within the law, be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

Teaching and Learning including delivery of the RSE curriculum

Our intent for the RSHE curriculum is for our students to grow up healthy, happy, safe and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain. RSHE at Penn Fields is a whole school approach and is inclusive of all students. Our curriculum aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. We have a commitment to ensure that our curriculum is relevant to all students and is taught in a way that is age appropriate.

In KS1, 2 and Year 7, we will follow a mindful and sequential RSHE scheme of work called Jigsaw, which is compliant with the statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education for September 2020. It is structured into 6 half-termly puzzles (units), with the Key Stages studying different aspects of the unit at the same time.

The units are:

- Being Me in My World
- Celebrating Difference
- Dreams and Goals
- Healthy Me

- Relationships
- Changing Me

In Year 8, 9, 10 and 11, students will use bronze, silver and gold wellbeing passports which are schemes of work produced by staff at Penn Fields and quality assured by the RSHE advisory service.

Amongst the topics to be covered will be:

- Developing understanding of human sexuality, sexual health, emotions, relationships and staying safe online
- Learning about contraception and a range of local and national sexual health advice
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay, such as the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy
- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- Learning the value of stable, loving and committed relationships based on marriage or partnerships, regardless of sexuality or sexual orientation
- Learning the value of respect, love and care
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Develop an understanding of unhealthy relationships, including bullying, coercion and exploitation
- Learning about healthy relationships and safety online, including the use of social media, cyberbullying and sexting
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others, for example, learning to make choices based on an understanding difference and with an absence of prejudice
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse
- Learning how to cope with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour such as drugs, smoking and alcohol.
- Learning how the law applies to sexual relationships
- Understanding the reasons for having protected sex (including STIs)
- Having access to confidential sexual health advice, support and, if necessary, treatment

Roles and responsibilities

The Co-Headteachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSHE.
- Ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- Monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the policy

The Head of PSHE, RSE and PfA is responsible for:

- Reviewing this policy
- Creating the whole school PSHE / RSE & PfA curriculum and lesson delivery to KS3, KS4 & KS5
- Working in collaboration and partnership with students, parents, carers, governors, staff and the Local Authority

All staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE. Class teachers are responsible for teaching RSHE at Penn Fields school. Teachers will reply to, and answer, student questions sensitively and openly. They will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the different faiths' views and avoid any negative impressions. Teachers will need to answer questions that may arise through the direct teaching of sex education, as well as those that may be asked at other times. All questions will be handled sensitively and set within a general context. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Head teacher. Questions which teachers feel uncertain about answering should be discussed with a senior member of staff and answered at a later date. Consideration should be given to religious or cultural factors, and to parents' wishes before questions are answered.

Students:

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

Parents:

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSHE lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective we:

- Inform parents about the school's RSHE policy and practice; this includes informing parents by letter or email before beginning to teach a unit of RSHE
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSHE of their child; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSHE in the school
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE. However, this rarely happens as, by working in partnership with parents, they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education
- A register of any students who are removed from lessons will be kept and distributed to all teachers involved.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE. The science curriculum in school also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from. Students over 15 provide their own consent which allows them to participate 3 terms before their 16th birthday. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Head Teacher. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education and that child will go to another class for the duration of the lesson.

Confidentiality

Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse or exploitation. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the designated person responsible for child protection or the Co Headteachers as a matter of urgency. Disclosure of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police (either by the teacher to whom it is disclosed or by the DSL). Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. We aim to ensure that students' best interests are maintained and try to encourage students to talk to their parents or carers to provide support. If confidentiality has to be broken, students are informed first and then supported by the designated teacher throughout the whole process.

Equal Opportunities

RSHE will be given to ensure quality of access for all students, regardless of gender, race or disability, therefore giving equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints or concerns about the Relationships and Sex Education programme should be made to the class teacher in the first instance. Parents can choose to follow the complaints procedure if they feel things are not resolved.

Monitoring arrangements the delivery of RSHE is monitored by SLT through, for example, planning scrutinies, learning walks and lesson observations. Students' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the staff, governing body and parents/carers.

Additional policies

Further policies in conjunction with this policy, please also see:

- Behaviour policy and procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Mental health and wellbeing policy
- Online safety policy

Please see below a useful document produced by the government, which provides answers to frequently asked questions: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-faqs>

Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

Next Review Date: September 2025