



RSE Policy

Swakeleys School for Girls

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Control Sheet

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Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2024

1. Rationale

Swakeleys School For Girls recognises that Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic (PSHCE) education and Relationship and Sex Education [RSE] is lifelong learning about the physical, moral, emotional, social and cultural development of students contributing to every students health, wellbeing and ability to be able to make well-informed decisions about their lives. RSE involves learning about relationships, sexual health, the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment and protection from discrimination, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity through a combination of acquiring knowledge and information, sharing information, developing skills, and exploring issues, beliefs, attitudes and values. The School works with students and parents and health professionals to ensure the best and most suitable education possible, taking into consideration the society within which we live and the different cultural, moral and religious values represented within that society. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

The School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, and the implementation of this policy, will seek to create an environment where students feel able to seek advice and help.

2. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare young people for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help young people develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around relationships
- Teach young people the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

3. Statutory Requirements

As a secondary 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](#). Under this Act we must follow the new statutory guidance issued. (This new guidance is available to view when you click on 'guidance').

4. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents.

5. Curriculum

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHCE education provision and will cover topics set out in the DfE's statutory guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health Education. An overview of our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary to respond to context and issues affecting young people, in an age appropriate way.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Swakeleys PSHCE programme is split in to three core themes: Health and Wellbeing, Living in the Wider World and Relationships and Identity. RSE is embedded within these core themes. Our RSE programme is planned by the curriculum leader Helena Allan using resources from, for example, the PSHE Association which is the national body for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE), for example when teaching about the understanding of and the importance of marriage and long term, stable and loving relationships for family life, love and care within different religions. The areas listed below are mainly taught in PSHCE lessons on a weekly or fortnightly basis depending on year group, and where possible lessons are taught by visitors such as a health professional. The school will inform any external organisations that there is an obligation to share materials with parents/carers and will only work with organisations willing to do this.

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

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

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, 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).

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The PSHCE Curriculum Leader for year 7-11 is Helena Allan, she is responsible for ensuring that RSE is included in the PSHCE programme according to the statutory guidance.

7.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-science components of RSE (see parents right to withdraw).

7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the 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 so that support can be provided. Staff have a responsibility to model positive behavior and be conscious of and avoid perpetuating stereotypes.

7.4 Students

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

Sensitive issues, confidentiality and advice to students

(a) Sensitive issues may include: Puberty, menstruation, sexual intercourse, contraception, abortion, safer sex, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), abuse, awareness of sexuality or gender identity and protection from discrimination. Teachers should understand the difference between stating facts and stating opinions. If work in sensitive areas of the curriculum causes teachers any concerns, they should discuss them with their line manager or a senior leader. The DfE document 'Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education updated in December 2025, contains further information on these topics and staff should be familiar with these. Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is and is not appropriate in a whole class setting to ensure a safe environment in which stakeholders do not feel embarrassed or anxious. Furthermore, discussions should always remain depersonalised. If a student requires further information, the class teacher can direct them to discuss further with an appropriate person, for example, the member of staff responsible for PSHCE, Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL] or Year Learning Co-Ordinator [YLC], as appropriate. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse, they must inform the DSL following Swakeleys School's

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. If a teacher is concerned about a student who is struggling with their identity and that this is affecting their physical and/or mental wellbeing, staff should pass this information to the relevant YLC for onward referral to support services. Questions, which have some relevance to sexual matters may arise during discussion. In order to avoid any question of parental withdrawal from such lessons, the law requires that 'such discussion is relatively limited and set within the context of the subject concerned'.

(b) Confidentiality: If a student makes a personal disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff cannot offer or guarantee unconditional confidentiality. The member of staff must refer to the DSL as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

(c) Advice to students: Through the pastoral support system, students will be given full information related to RSE elements. Students may also access the School Nurse through their YLC or the Welfare team.

8. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

The School recognises the importance of the role of parents in their daughter's own sex and relationships education and seeks to work with parents to ensure that its students have access to the curriculum, regardless of ability, race or religious belief, in accordance with its Equal Opportunities Policy. Every care is taken to be sensitive to the religious and cultural views of parents and their daughters.

8.1 Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have been consulted in the formulation of this policy and their views sought on a regular basis. Parents are informed via the web site and an email, at the start of the academic year of the proposed content of the sex and relationships education modules relevant to their daughter's year group. They have the right to request to see any resources used in the modules and to seek clarification, if desired, from the Curriculum Leader, the relevant YLC or the Deputy Head. If any changes are made to the programme during the academic year, parents are emailed these changes.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from some or all components of sex education within RSE which are not part of the Science curriculum 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. The Headteacher can refuse a request for withdrawal in exceptional circumstances, for example because of safeguarding concerns or vulnerability. There is no right to withdrawal from Relationships Education or Health Education.

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 student's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

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

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE 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 RSE.

10. Managing the policy

Senior leaders will continue to seek and provide training opportunities for staff to develop an understanding, and support the delivery of RSE. Staff should be familiar with, and have an understanding of, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in combination with the RSE policy.

It is the responsibility of the PSHCE curriculum leader to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHCE and to liaise with teaching staff to ensure that the required aspects of RSE are being covered.

The Board of Trustees and Leadership Team are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the implementation of RSE.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on 1st March 2027.

Appendix 1: Overview of topics studied in PSHCE

Key for themes: Health & Wellbeing , Living in the Wider World & Relationships & Identity					
Week	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
1 st Sept.	Introduction lesson to PSHCE	Growth Mindset	Developing Learning Skills for GCSEs	Why is PSHCE important?	Developing Learning Skills for GCSEs
8 th Sept.	Who am I?	Social media & self-esteem	Self-esteem	Influences & self-expression	Preparing for exams in year 11 & managing exam stress
15 th Sept.	Praising you, praising me	Body image	Health – tattoos & piercings	Social anxiety	Depression
22 nd Sept.	An introduction to mental health	Learning to relax	Mental health & wellbeing – new challenges	Screen time	Anxiety
29 th Sept.	Who to ask for help/advice	Mental health & wellbeing – promoting emotional wellbeing	Mental health & wellbeing – Healthy coping strategies	Managing tough times – loss & bereavement	Perservance & procrastination
6 th Oct.	Black History Month	Black History Month	Mental health & wellbeing – Reframing negative thinking	Mental health & wellbeing – recognising mental ill health & when to get help	Black History month
13 th Oct.	Resilience	Mental health & wellbeing – attitudes to mental health	Black History Month	Black History Month	Planning for mock revision
20 th Oct.	Kindness & empathy	Self-awareness	Energy Drinks	Social media & self-esteem	Depression and mood management techniques
Half Term					
3 rd Nov.	Personal development & target setting	Communication Skills	What are communities and why do we need them?	Equality & Equity	Preparing for the exam period
10 th Nov.	The importance of respect	Ambition, aspiration and setting realistic career goals	Responsible finances & avoiding debt	Protected Characteristics & hate crime	Personal Safety
17 th Nov.	Wants, needs & priorities	Saving & investing money	Anti-social behaviour	County lines	Finance: Borrowing money

24 th Nov.	Budgeting our money	Ableism visible & invisible disabilities	Online reputation	Unplanned pregnancy	Finance: Cost of living crisis
1 st Dec.	Stereotyping	Sexism in society	Gaming & Gambling	Social media validation	Mock Exams
8 th Dec.	What are Protected Characteristics?	County Lines & Gangs	Nationalism vs patriotism, free speech vs hate speech	Future careers and the rise of AI	Mock Exams
15 th Dec.	Racism introduction	County Lines & Gangs continued	Overview of 2025	Overview of 2025	Mock Exams

Christmas Holidays

5 th Jan.	Careers Focus Fortnight				
12 th Jan.					
19 th Jan.	Maintaining friendships	Consent	Conflict management	Coercive, exploitative, abusive relationships	Sextortion & spotting AI
26 th Jan.	Anti bullying	Introduction to STIs	Diverse relationships LGBTQ+	Gaslighting – emotional abuse	Pornographic deep fakes & non-consensual image sharing
2 nd Feb.	The importance of Trust	Tolerance & mutual respect	Mysogony	LGBTQ+Rights	Honour violence & killings
9 th Feb.	Why are families and long-term, stable relationships important?	Revision Techniques before year 8 exams	Gender Equality	Assessing readiness for sex	Language microaggressions & bullying

HALF TERM

23 rd Feb.	Dangers of smoking & second hand smoking	Dangers of vaping	The importance of good quality sleep	Deepfakes: malicious use & staying safe	Responsible public health choices
2 nd Mar.	Puberty	Group messaging: what's appropriate & what's the law?	FGM	Alcohol relationships &	Fertility & reproductive health
9 th Mar.	International Women's Day	International Women's Day	International Women's Day	International Women's Day	International Women's Day

16 th Mar.	Periods	Cyberbullying & online trolls	First Aid & CPR	Cancer screening, prevention, risks & self examination	Breast health & self-examination
23 rd Mar.	Personal Hygiene	Contraception	Separations, loss, grief & managing the digital literacy	Drugs – Nitrous Oxide	Neurodiversity

Easter Holidays

13 th Apr.	Healthy relationships	Exploring Identity	Child sexual exploitation	Year 10 Internal Exams	Online dating
20 th Apr.	Peer pressure	Exploring identity continued	Rights, trust & values in relationships	Forced marriage	Sexualisation of the media & its impacts on our values
27 th Apr.	Hurtful Behaviour	Contraception	Sexual harassment & the law	Parenting & responsibility	Brain development & parenting
4 th May	Online grooming	Falling in love & romantic feelings	What are coercive & controlling relationships?	Adoption & fostering	Parenting costs and considerations
11 th May		Marriage and entering it freely	Sharing nude pictures & the law	Divorce, separation & loss	The role of pleasure
18 th May	Relationships summary lesson	Relationships summary lesson	Gender stereotypes	Stalking, harassment & the law	Contraception

HALF TERM

1 st June	Pride month	Pride month	The importance of volunteering	Employment rights and responsibilities	
8 th June	Pollution, plastic & our environment	Democracy & dictatorships	Pride month	Work Shadowing Week	
15 th June	Media Literacy	Refugees, immigration & asylum	Algorithms and subcultures	Pride month	
22 nd June	UK Government	Civil & Criminal Law	Financial exploitation	Health & safety at work	
29 th June	British values & Religion	Voting & British parties	British values: multiculturalism	Cybercrime and the Dark Web dangers	

6 th July	Human rights & responsibilities	South Asian Heritage Month	Criminal Justice system	Parliament & law making	
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Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school students should know

Families

Curriculum content:

1. That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
2. How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children.
3. Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony.
4. That 'common-law marriage' is a myth and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children.
5. That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal.⁸
6. How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.
7. The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development.
8. How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Respectful relationships

Curriculum content:

1. The characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.
2. How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal.
3. The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others.
4. What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs.
5. The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict.
6. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
7. Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration.
8. The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok.
9. How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice.
10. How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others.
11. How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others.
12. Pupils should have an opportunity to discuss how some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called "involuntary celibates" (incels) or online influencers.

Online safety and awareness

Curriculum content:

1. Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
2. Online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online. Pupils should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues.
3. The characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and / or may post things which aren't real / have been created with AI. That social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online.
4. Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images.
5. That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Pupils should know how to seek support and should understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared. Pupils should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime.
6. What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online.⁹
7. About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them.
8. That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamorise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong.
9. That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice.
10. How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns.

11. That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately. Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it.
12. How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
13. That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (e.g. to enable targeted advertising).
14. That criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion.
15. That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. It is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk.

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	

