



Woodside Group RSHE Policy

Aims

This policy aims to cover Woodside Group's approach to the delivery of Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) within the PSHE curriculum and provide guidance on what can and cannot be withdrawn from a student's curriculum and how to request this.

We intend for our students to leave with an ability to survive in the world after Woodside and access their next phase of education at whatever level is suitable to them, with the ability to navigate relationships with other people and manage their physical and mental health due to a broad and thorough PSHE education.

This policy was written with reference to the [RSE and Health Education Statutory Guidance](#).

Definitions and Rationale

As Woodside provides education over both Primary and Secondary ages, and at times the chronological age (based on date of birth) of a child may be distinctly different to that of their societal age (based on their understanding of the world). Students of a primary age (e.g. those at Stonehurst) will have access to the Relationships and Health curriculum as defined below. It is important to note that the right to withdraw students at this primary age from anything outside of the 'relationships' curriculum is possible but we would encourage you to discuss this with the head of base. For secondary pupils, the right to withdraw from 'sex' education is possible up to 3 terms before they are 16, but again, we see great benefit in the provision

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of this education and encourage you to discuss with us any concerns you have in this area.

“Relationships” education is focused on the way we interact with other people; building, maintaining and managing relationships. These could be with friends, family members, people in the community or those of a romantic interest. Woodside believes this is important to teach to our students as many people with autism find social relationships difficult to build or maintain and without the sufficient skills to manage these relationships could find themselves at a disadvantage in their future lives with the potential to become isolated and vulnerable to mental ill-health.

At Primary ages and ability levels, we will be teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This includes the diversity within relationships and families and developing an understanding, acceptance and tolerance of those that are different. Students will be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. They will be taught the importance of establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact in the physical and digital environment– these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary. Students will also be taught how to recognise and react appropriately to healthy and unhealthy relationships, including signs of abuse and bullying e.g. emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Sexual abuse will be taught via understanding personal boundaries and language and concepts from the Science curriculum e.g. 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.

As students increase in age, confidence and capability the building blocks that they established earlier in their RSE develops into application to wider contexts and situations, including but not limited to the consent and management of personal relationships, how the media can impact

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expectations on self and relationships and dealing appropriately with peer pressure.

“Health” Education is focused on maintaining good physical and mental wellbeing, growing and changing and keeping safe. This is including developing healthy habits such as sleep and hygiene routines, sun safety, balanced diets, exercise, recognising personal strengths and challenges, physical and emotional changes (puberty and reproduction are covered within these sessions as well as the Science curriculum), importance of rules and restrictions, learning about risk and keeping self and information safe e.g. e-safety, first aid.

At later stages in the curriculum the above knowledge is developed to cover a more in depth understanding and application, including information on drugs and alcohol, influence and independence. A large part of health education at secondary level revolves around managing risks in person or online, such as those associated with being sexually active such as sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy but also understanding the importance of self examination and what happens during puberty. We believe this is important to teach our students as it helps them prepare for a long and healthy life and so they will be aware of how to manage situations such as pregnancy in a well-informed manner.

“Sex” Education is only taught to students of secondary age or ability, focused on the different forms of contraception that are available to people choosing to be sexually active and would be taught in conjunction with aspects of the the health education described above. We believe it is important that students are aware of the options available to them and the risks and benefits associated with the varying types of contraception. Similarly, whilst only a small area of the curriculum, sex for pleasure and masturbation can be taught within both “health” and “relationships” due to the connection between understanding what a healthy relationship may look like and how to express forms of consent, self expression and self awareness.

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Gender Identity and Gender Dysphoria

Due to the link between ASC and Gender Dysphoria, we are conscious of the sensitive nature of discourse in this area. Therefore, should students present to staff a sense of gender dysphoria, or parents express this has happened at home, we will work in partnership with parents and students to identify the appropriate steps forward. For more information, please contact your headteacher or the Head of Education.

Responsibilities

The creation, maintenance and distribution of this policy is the responsibility of the Head of Education.

The Director of Education is responsible for ensuring that the teaching of RSE meets the standards established in this guidance.

RSE will be taught by PSHE staff or those the Headteacher or Directors deem appropriate due to their experience.

PSHE teachers will be responsible for reporting back to the Head of Education any areas of concern within the curriculum they have, attending courses or training selected by Woodside and self-identifying any subject training that may be of benefit.

All members of the Woodside Group have a duty to Safeguard students and due to the sensitive nature of the topics covered in both PSHE/RSE should always be familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and latest KCSIE.

Legislation

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

Documents that inform this policy and work associated with this:

Education Act (1996)

Learning and Skills Act (2000)

Education and Inspections Act (2006)

Equality Act (2010)

Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)

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Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)/(2021)
Children and Social Work Act (2017)

This policy should also be read with reference to:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- SEN Policy

Curriculum Design

Woodside's PSHE curriculum and therefore RSE is informed by the PSHE Association's programmes of study for Key Stages 1-5. It is planned and delivered by PSHE Teachers who have access to the PSHE Association Membership so all involved are constantly up to date with the latest guidance in the subject.

Planning, tracking and identification of teaching needs is done through our Planning and Tracking Logs that show, at a glance, the number of times an objective has been taught and how confident the teacher and subject are with the learning in those sessions.

Teachers also have the ability to plan 'reactively' or provide intervention with conditions indicating that a priority need has emerged e.g. a student that is experiencing high levels of anxiety would benefit from work in the Health sections of the curriculum.

Safe and Effective Practice

Teachers should seek to create an environment that their pupils feel confident in discussing the sensitive issues that may arise within their lessons. Due to every child being so different, this is down to the teacher's discretion. Some students may benefit from a behaviour agreement or others require an explicit relationship building between the teacher and student.

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Sensitive topics should always be taught 'at a distance' e.g. not asking for personal examples or information but using example characters that can then be related back to the pupil.

If students ask questions that staff are uncomfortable answering they can apply de-escalation strategies if it is due to raising behavioural needs or refer them back to the learning objectives of the lesson to stay on track. If the question is related to something they can have the answer to but you're unsure how to respond, reassure them that it is a valid question and that you will come back to them after getting some advice from the Head of Base or the Head of Education. If the topic is unrelated or inappropriate for their age/ability, speak to the Head of Base who may deem it appropriate to discuss with parents. In all situations, normal safeguarding procedures apply and concerns should be raised to the appropriate person(s) in a timely manner in line with the safeguarding policy.

Parents

With the regular contact between the Head of Base and Family Link Worker to parents, a regular communication stream about the work a student engages with in all areas of the curriculum will occur. All Heads of Base and the Family Link Worker are able to sign post parents to this policy or contact the Head of Education to contact a parent to discuss any issues or concerns they have.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education content that is not part of the statutory Science curriculum and can do so by contacting the Head of Base who will inform the Head of Education and PSHE teacher. Parents/carers cannot withdraw students from Relationships Education due to its statutory requirements but are able to adapt Health Education where required. We request that if parents/carers have concerns about the content of any aspect of the RSE curriculum to contact the school to discuss the options available.

Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluating

Teachers will critically reflect on the work they deliver in RSE by identifying areas of success and weakness in their subject knowledge, difficulties in applying specific objectives to lesson materials and any other comments that

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would benefit the development of the curriculum. These will be discussed during PSHE Department Meetings as a standing agenda item. Pupils have the opportunity to review and reflect on their learning at the end of every lesson during the 'conferencing' (see Assessment and Marking Policy)

Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending planning learning activities and is encouraged through regular dialogue with their teaching staff. They also have the opportunity to discuss their mood, concerns etc with their Head of Base at any time but also during Personal Planning sessions.

This policy will be reviewed annually but was initially updated in Sept 2021 following consultation with parents and staff to reflect any changes required.

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