

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Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) within the PSHE curriculum and provide guidance on what can and cannot be withdrawn from a student's curriculum and how to request this.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 2025.

Definitions and Rationale

"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 these topics 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.

"Sex" Education is 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 health education described below. This is only taught at secondary level (keystages 3-5). 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.

"Health" Education is focused on maintaining good physical and mental wellbeing including managing risks 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 will be aware of how to manage situations such as pregnancy in a well-informed manner.
It is important to note that the teaching of the appropriate terminology for parts of the body, including the reproductive system, is part of the science curriculum and due to the nature of our schools' curriculums can be taught in either PSHE or Science.

Responsibilities

The creation, maintenance and distribution of this policy is the responsibility of the Head of Education with support of the PSHE Coordinator. 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 with the curriculum they have, attending courses or trainings selected by Woodside as part of their annual CPD and self-identifying any subject training that may be of benefit from services such as National College and PSHE Association.
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 staff should always be familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and latest KCSIE of which regular training is provided through opportunities such as weekly safeguarding snippets .

Legislation

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2025, 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.

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 unique 'Long Term Planning' documents that show what topics a student has studied and provide opportunities to flag individual learning objectives for follow up action.

Teachers also have the ability to plan 'reactively' or provide intervention when conditions indicate 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.

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 Headteacher/Head of Base or the Head of Education.

Parents/Carers

With the regular contact between the Headteacher/Head of Base and Family Link Worker (where one is available) to parents, a regular communication stream about the work a student engages with in all areas of the curriculum will occur. All Headteachers/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 curriculum and can do so by contacting the Headteacher/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. Where a pupil requests to opt-in but their parents have opted out, we will contact parents to discuss this matter to ensure a harmonious relationship between all parties prevails. For further details please refer to paragraphs 16-23 of the statutory guidance.

Parents and carers are also able to request examples of the learning materials used in lessons by contacting the Headteacher.

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 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/HT at any time but also during Weekly Review sessions.