WOOLDANDS SCHOOL: Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy

REVIEWED: October 2026

HEADTEACHER/CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: _____

Contents

1. Aims
2. Statutory requirements
3. Policy development
4. Definition
5. Curriculum
6. Delivery of RSE
7. Roles and responsibilities
8. Parents' right to withdraw
9. Training
10. Monitoring arrangements
11. Appendix 1: Government Guidance

1. Aims

We believe that children have a right to information about themselves and their bodies. Working in partnership with parents is essential, they are consulted on this area of work and have the opportunity to discuss the programme with staff. In this way they become acquainted with the programme and the resources.

Relationships and Sex Education is encompassed within personal development.

We believe that Relationships and Sex Education should:

- develop understanding in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and/or level of development;
- support and complement that provided by parents and have regard to parents views about its content and presentation;
- provide accurate biological facts and access to information;
- enable children to develop and practice skills of communication and interpersonal relationships, including identifying and managing feelings;
- provide support for students' physical, emotional and sexual development;
- offer guidance on general behaviour;
- maintain the dignity and privacy of students;
- lead to the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare students to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner;
- enable children to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks of certain types of behaviour and to accept that all individuals must behave responsibly in their relationships;
- prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene;
- help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy;
- create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships; and
- teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

Our Aims are:

- to develop the students' existing knowledge and understanding;
- to promote the students' respect for themselves and others;
- to promote responsible behaviour that does not cause risks to the child's self or others;
- to develop skills in making informed decisions and combating exploitation and peer pressure; and
- to appreciate the value of stable family life and the responsibilities of parenthood.

The Objectives are:

- to deliver a relationships and sex curriculum that is understood by parents/carers and takes their views into account;
- to improve staff skills in teaching relationships and sex education to students with a wide range of special educational needs; and
- to develop a bank of accessible and effective resources that is supportive to improved teaching and learning.

2. Statutory Requirements

As a maintained special school, we must provide relationships education to all students as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. However, we are not required to provide sex education, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. 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.

As a maintained special school, Woodlands School is required to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in accordance with the statutory guidance which came into effect on 1 September 2026. The school must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State under the Education Act 1996 and Education Act 2002, and must teach the statutory elements of relationships and sex education within the Science curriculum. RSE will be delivered in an age-, developmentally and needs-appropriate way, taking account of pupils' individual SEND, communication and learning needs.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to read the policy and comment as required.
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

4. Definition

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 is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Our aims and objectives will be achieved by the following means:

- the delivery of a relationships and sex curriculum, within the Equals SoW, which is appropriate to the needs of the students and offers opportunities for continuity and progression within the subject;
- where required, an individualised and bespoke programme;
- the use of methods that are effective in the teaching of sensitive content including interactive activities and materials that are appropriate to age, learning needs and emotional development;

- the use of a wide range of resources, including published work schemes, multi media resource, pictures, objects, toys and games;
- a school ethos that promotes the development of self esteem, independence, interpersonal skills and responsibility;
- a collaborative approach involving education, health and other professionals; and through the implementation of a planned relationships and sex programme geared to the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes/values for students at different ages and stages of development.

5. Curriculum

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents and staff, taking into account the age and special educational needs of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed.

Sex education is not compulsory for primary phase, however where deemed appropriate primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught throughout our Equals curriculum at a level appropriate to the individual learner needs and their Pathway.

Students will receive stand-alone sex education sessions, where deemed appropriate. On occasions students will receive one to one sessions, this will be in discussion with the parents/ carers.

Pathways
Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships and giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy,nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

1. Knowing my body
2. Knowing me
3. Private and public
4. Touching and allowing others to touch me
5. Forming relationships
6. Sexual intimacy with another person

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1

Our learners have complex learning needs and some topics will not be delivered as stand alone subjects as they are not deemed appropriate. On occasions, learners will receive one to one teaching when certain aspects of the guidance is relevant.

To support our students learning, real pictures maybe used, where deemed appropriate, to facilitate teaching and learning.

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).

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The Governing Board

The governing board 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-statutory RSE (see section 8).

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
- Liaising with parents
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn fromthe non-statutory/non science components of RSE

All teachers across the school have responsibility for teaching RSE to the students in their class. 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.

7.4 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE, at their appropriate level. They are supported to learn issues related to RSE and to treat others with respect and sensitivity.

8. 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/non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing to the Headteacher.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE 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 to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in student's educational record. The Headteacher School 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 and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The school will also seek support from the school nurse or other professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored through the school self-evaluation procedures:

- Planning scrutiny
- Learning walks
- Pupil Progress Meetings
- Training feedback

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Appendix 1

The Equals SoW for RSE (the core curriculum) is divided up into six sections, namely:

7. Knowing my body
8. Knowing me
9. Private and public
10. Touching and allowing others to touch me
11. Forming relationships
12. Sexual intimacy with another person

SECTION ONE

Knowing My Body

Covered in this section are

- Body parts
- Their functions - what the parts do
- Age differences
- Gender differences
- My clothes – on top and underneath
- Menstruation
- The physical manifestations of a sexual state
- Masturbation
- Hygiene.

PLEASE NOTE

None of the areas above are age or key stage related, though some such as menstruation and sexual feelings will be related to physical development, and masturbation should only be taught if the individual has demonstrated a sexual awareness of their own body. Learners do not need to be taught the areas in the order they are listed above, though it is for example, logically best if you teach body part names before their functions!

In any event, ALL teachers should be prepared to revisit ALL of these areas regularly, every single year, though how much you need to revisit them will depend on how much has been retained and built upon by your learners.

SOME ISSUES WILL NEED TO BE TAUGHT AS SINGLE GENDER GROUPS (SGG). When this is recommended the initials SGG will be entered next to the Learning Intention. If there are no initials, teaching to a mixed group is fine.

SECTION TWO

Knowing Me

Covered in this section are

- What I like and what I don't like
- Who I like and who I don't like
- What I am able to do and what I find difficult
- Trusting somebody – who can I trust?
- Me, you and us
- Developing a positive image and high self-esteem.

SECTION THREE

Private and Public

Covered in this section are

- Where on my body is private?
- Where on my body is not private?
- Where can I be by myself?
- Where can I go to be private?
- Where can I spend time with other people?
- My room.

SECTION FOUR

Touching and allowing others to touch me

Covered in this section are

- Where on the body can I touch another person appropriately?
- Gaining permission to touch
- Where is it inappropriate to touch?
- Resisting pressure and saying 'no'
- Saying 'yes'?
- Making choices.

PLEASE NOTE. This section (which is essentially about consent) when taken in conjunction with the previous Section Three on Privacy, together form the bedrock of any RSE policy and practice. It is an essential element for all learners who have demonstrated a personal sexual identity.

SECTION FIVE

Forming relationships

Covered in this section are

- What does a relationship mean?
- Liking somebody and loving somebody
- Dating
- Having a girlfriend/boyfriend
- Same sex relationships
- Compliments

Please Note. This section should only be covered if your learners

(i) are already in a relationship with another person(s) (whether this is/these are sexual or not) or

(ii) indicate that they want to have a relationship with others (whether this is sexual or not).

SECTION SIX

Sexual intimacy with another person

Covered in this section are

- The sexual act
- The recognition that tenderness, care and empathy are key components of any sexual act with another
- Safe sex
- The possible consequences of unsafe sex.

PLEASE NOTE. This section should only be taught to those who have demonstrated a sexual persona already AND are in a relationship that is, is likely to be, or may soon become, sexual. The obvious exception to this rider is the Learning Intention related to casual sex with a professional sex worker (see below).