



WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)  
Policy  
taught within Personal, Social,  
Health & Economic Education (PSHE)**

**Senior School Overview  
for School Website  
2021/2022**

Inspiring WGS students to make a difference.  
Transforming lives as well as minds.

# Overview

## Introduction

This RSE Policy should be read in conjunction with the 'Senior School PSHE Overview Policy' which details more detailed overall subject content, methods of teaching and staff responsible for this, along with processes for monitoring and evaluation. As part of a whole school approach, and based on mutual respect, equality in all its forms, and tolerance, Personal, Social, Health, and Economic education (PSHE) in the Senior school at WGS aims to develop the qualities and attributes our students need to thrive as well rounded individuals, family members and members of UK society, through a flexible and adaptive broad based curriculum which encompasses fundamental British values and has due regard to the nine protected characteristics of the 2010 Equality Act\*.<sup>1</sup>

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is fully integrated into our PSHE curriculum: it is exceptionally important for our students' personal and social development. RSE focused modules help students navigate the physical, emotional, and social changes of puberty and later adolescence, in an atmosphere of trust. RSE also encourages the exploration of values, moral issues, sexuality and personal relationships and through it, we strive to help our students become respectful citizens with integrity and good judgement. To this end, RSE also includes the development of self-esteem, self-awareness, a sense of moral responsibility, and the knowledge and skills to avoid and resist unwanted sexual experience.

All young people have sexual knowledge of their own; but what they pick up from fake news, the media and their peer culture is often confusing, misunderstood or simply wrong. RSE at WGS provides accurate information and provides our students with a safe space within which to discuss any fears or misunderstandings, and to challenge and question the norms of their peer group. We also discuss and challenge attitudes and behaviours displayed in the adult world with regards to sexism, prejudice, and discrimination as part of our whole school programme.

The Department for Education is introducing compulsory Relationships Education for primary pupils and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for secondary pupils from September 2020. This policy and the Senior School PSHE overview policy are written with these guidelines in mind.<sup>2</sup> Independent schools (unlike others) do not have to include Health (and Wellbeing) within the RSE policy, but are bound to include these within PSHE which is compulsory and enables Independent schools to meet the Independent School Standards as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> \*Protected characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or belief, Sex, and Sexual Orientation. At WGS we aim to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

<sup>2</sup>\* [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)

## Overview

In accordance with this statutory guidance, Secondary School RSE at Wolverhampton Grammar School aims to provide students with clear, impartial information about sex, while promoting its importance within a stable and loving relationship. We promote the equality of gender and sexuality, while acknowledging differences of opinion, in an atmosphere of tolerant discussion. Recognising the physical and emotional changes through puberty and adolescence we aim to show students how to foster and maintain good relationships, often in the face of pressure from the media, internet, and peer pressure, through critical decision-making. It is important that students understand that their actions have consequences and that emotions must be managed, as well as how to recognise abuse and exploitation. Students are encouraged to develop their own values and attitudes about sex, sexuality and relationships, but to respect and empathise with those of others. Furthermore, they should recognise that sexual intimacy involves strong emotional feelings and they should have regard not only for their own, but other people's feelings, decisions, rights and bodies. *(More details are included in Appendix i, and WGS content is also outlined in the PSHE overview).*

We have dedicated PSHE lessons (of which RSE is a part) taught fortnightly, usually by form tutors which allows issues to be picked up on and expanded as necessary during form time. Lessons are very often discussion led, and we invite external speakers and theatre companies with expertise in sexual health, online safety, and relationships to work with our students in an age-appropriate manner. Heads of House support the Subject Lead for PSHE and monitor PSHE lessons as needed. Bev Young is the current Subject Lead for PSHE.

From September 2021, when joining WGS, parents receive information outlining the PSHE programme including the elements of RSE. They are asked if they would like more information and it is assumed if a reply is not received that they give their consent to their child receiving the lessons. Information regarding PSHE and RSE is to be published via Firefly and on the school website.

Parents have a legal right to view this RSE policy, and to withdraw their child from sex education elements which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science, if they wish. In such cases WGS will seek and take account of parental views, and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents by encouraging dialogue between parents and their son/daughter. If any parent wishes to withdraw their child from the sex education element only, they should inform the Head in writing. They will be invited into school for a meeting to ensure that the family are aware of both the content covered in the sex education sessions and, importantly, the way WGS teaches about these issues. It will be made clear that Biology will still cover elements of reproduction, and that RSE is about the emotional, social, legal and safety side of this topic. The benefits of receiving this important education along with any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on their child will be discussed: this could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in class, rather than what was exactly discussed. These detrimental effects may be mitigated if parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead, and parents will be asked about providing appropriate, purposeful education. Whilst the student is absent from the sex education element of PSHE lessons, the school will suggest appropriate and purposeful work to be completed during these sessions.

Please note that should you wish to withdraw your child from the sex education element of RSE, that WGS follows the statutory requirements for a student to be asked if they wish to re-join in with the sex education elements of PSHE three terms before their 16th birthday, and students will be allowed to do so even if the parents have withdrawn their child. WGS will document this whole process, ensure a record is kept and contact parents as part of the process.

## Overview

### Our Overarching Concepts at WGS (green indicates elements that primarily fall within RSE)

1. **Identity** (their personal qualities, attitudes, skills, attributes and achievements and what influences these)
2. **Relationships** (including different types and in different settings)
3. **A healthy (including physically, emotionally and socially) balanced lifestyle** (including within relationships, work-life, exercise and rest, spending and saving and diet)
4. **Risk** (identification, assessment and how to manage risk rather than simply the avoidance of risk for self and others) and safety (including behaviour and strategies to employ in different settings)
5. **Diversity and equality** (in all its forms)
6. **Rights** (including the notion of universal human rights), responsibilities (including fairness and justice) and consent (in different contexts)
7. **Change** (as something to be managed) and resilience (the skills, strategies and 'inner resources' we can draw on when faced with challenging change or circumstance)
8. **Power** (how it is used and encountered in a variety of contexts including persuasion, bullying, negotiation and 'win-win' outcomes)
9. **Career** (including enterprise, employability and economic understanding)

## Non-Bias

All information presented to students will be presented in a balanced manner. It is acceptable for opinions to be discussed; however, this will always be countered by the opposite side of an argument in a professional manner.

## Assessment

Due to the discussion-based nature of the subject, there is no formal assessment and there is no homework set for RSE within PSHE, although Tutors may decide to revisit or expand on topics in Form time and student research into topics is encouraged. Commendations or sanctions will be applied as in any other subject. Students are requested to keep a digital record of their PSHE and RSE journey – this method will change as technology advances but we currently use OneNote and other electronic documentation in Years 7-10 and ask Year 11-13 students to make notes on their mobile phones, allowing them to be able to access information and support outside school.

## Setting Ground Rules

The atmosphere in RSE elements of PSHE will be as relaxed as possible to discuss delicate and sensitive issues, while still remaining a workable, viable and productive learning environment.

Staff will set the following ground rules with students:

- Listen to what others have to say
- Do not be nasty to each other
- Tell the story, not the person
- Discussion stays in the room – no gossip
- No talking when someone else is speaking
- Confidentiality (within the guideline of Child Protection)\*<sup>3</sup>
- If all you can say is something unpleasant, don't say anything
- No-one is to be forced to say anything
- No laughing at others' questions or answers
- Think before you ask a question

<sup>3</sup> \* It is inappropriate to promise total confidentiality, although you want an atmosphere of trust where sensitive issues can be raised and discussed. If a member of staff suspects a young person has been / is being sexually or physically abused and this was disclosed, then the member of staff must inform the DSLs or Deputies.

## Overview

### Curriculum:

- The curriculum mirrors DfE guidance and PSHE Association suggestions.

### Teaching methods and Learning:

To facilitate students' learning in the RSE element of PSHE:

- The purpose of each lesson is made clear.
- Baseline learning assessment should be briefly done at the start of a lesson and time should be given for students to reflect, consolidate and apply their learning towards the end.
- Appropriate learning experiences are planned and meet the needs of all the students in the class.
- Learning experiences draw on students' own experiences or existing knowledge and provide a range of opportunities for students to learn, practise and demonstrate skills, attitudes and knowledge and understanding. Personal stories or examples should not however be shared.
- Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to evaluate their own progress.
- Attention is given to developing a safe and secure classroom climate.
- Staff training needs are met through CPD courses and staff meetings.

### Differentiation

Due to the nature of the topics covered, differentiation for any ability will often be organic and based on how the discussion in the lesson progresses. However, our staff will have ideas on how to stretch the thinking of the more able students or support those who are struggling to understand concepts. Being able to put forward their own view both confidently and in a balanced manner is an area that all students should be striving to achieve. Staff at WGS will encourage and praise as appropriate, and will use questioning skills to elicit more detailed answers where needed. While outcome will usually be the same, differentiation by task or method may take place.

### Links with transition from the Junior School

The PSHE coordinators from both the Junior and Secondary school regularly discuss the subject and share knowledge on new training that may have taken place. These meetings also aim to look at progression throughout the teaching of PSHE of which RSE is a main part.

### Please also refer to the following policies:

PSHE Policy – website from Sept 2020	Safeguarding Policy – website
Curriculum Policy (Senior School) – website	Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy - website

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PSHE

## Overview

### Appendix i – The Aims of RSE at WGS

The aim of RSE at WGS is to give our students the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know, for example, what a healthy relationship looks like or what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It also covers contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting any pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It fosters discussion as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships allowing students to understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing. It helps students identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

Effective RSE does **not** encourage early sexual experimentation. It should enable our students to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables them to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also aims to give our students the skills and knowledge to equip them for life after WGS: to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy relationships of any kind, and sexual relationships at the appropriate time.

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that students are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This is delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way allowing scope for students to ask questions in a safe environment. (Many teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion or use question boxes to allow students to raise issues anonymously).

RSE at WGS provides clear progression from what is taught in Relationships Education in the Junior School, taught at the appropriate time and extends teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, students are also taught about family relationships, friendships, and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. Through this they should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. This knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, can then empower them to then identify when relationships are unhealthy. Students will understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on their mental wellbeing.

Secondary Relationships Education is underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation of individual resilience and character. This includes character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth. There are many ways WGS facilitates opportunities for our students to undertake social action, such as Coast-to-Coast, DofE, Student Parliament, and through our many clubs and societies. We are in the process of contacting the National Citizenship Service as well for further possible input into the curriculum.

Students are taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All students should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Opportunity for the exploration of sexual orientation and gender identity is available at a timely point and when discussing these topics, it is recognised that students may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There are equal opportunities to explore the features of stable and healthy samesex relationships within the RSE and PSHE programme.

It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Schools may explore faith, or other perspectives on some of these issues in other subjects such as Religious Education.

## Overview

Students should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Key aspects of the law relating to sex which to be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, are also addressed sensitively and clearly. WGS addresses the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM) and signposts where to find support. We highlight that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or to fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM.

As well as addressing these issues in the context of the law, students may also need support 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 oneself or others at risk. We are mindful that for students who are experiencing, or have experienced, unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, WGS may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where these students can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support. AS tracking is a tool that we use to help staff be aware of potential issues as well as our knowledge of our students through the Form tutor.

Internet safety is also addressed. Students are taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This includes how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Students should have a strong understanding of how data is generated, collected, shared and used online, for example, how personal data is captured on social media or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them. Some students are also exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.

Specifically, by the end of their time at WGS students will discover more about:

### Families

- different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- Marriage, including their legal status e.g. legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony and why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

## Overview

### Respectful relationships, including friendships

- characteristics of positive and healthy friendships and relationships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

### Online and media

- rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- the impact of viewing harmful content.
- that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

### Being safe

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).



## Overview

### Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause. (elements within Biology as well)
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. (elements within Biology as well)
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

### The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people, and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- domestic violence against women and girls (but also that men and boys can be affected)
- healthy and unhealthy relationships
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs, extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)