THE WENLOCK SCHOOL

PSHE and RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) Policy

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Version	Date	Created By
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1. Aims

PSHE and RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) is lifelong learning about the physical, moral, emotional, social, and cultural development of pupils. It involves learning about healthy relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity, safety online and offline, respect, love, puberty, and personal identity. The core aim of providing this education is to safeguard pupils.

During their time at The Wenlock School, pupils will learn key knowledge and skills to help them, and others stay safe and healthy, preparing them for the responsibilities of adult life. Our curriculum is designed to support pupils' diligence and resilience in the face of widespread sexual harassment and abuse, including online.

The three core aims of PSHE are:

1. Health and Wellbeing
2. Relationships
3. Living in the Wider World: economic wellbeing and being a responsible citizen.

The aims of RSE are to:

- Provide a framework for sensitive discussions.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

2. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils, and parents. The process involves:

- Review: Staff review relevant national and local guidance.
- Staff Consultation: Staff review the policy and make recommendations.
- Parent/Stakeholder Consultation: Parents and interested parties are invited to give feedback on the curriculum and policy. New government guidance now emphasizes transparency with parents, who should be updated if the school's RSHE provision shifts in ways that are not obvious from this policy.
- Pupil Consultation: Pupils' input on what they want from their RSE is gathered. The new RSHE guidance places "pupil engagement" at the top of its guiding principles.

- Ratification: Once amendments are made, the policy is shared with and ratified by the School Board of Governors.

This policy is written in accordance with Part 1, paragraphs 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii) and Part 2, of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations (2015).

3. Statutory Requirements

PSHE education is a necessary part of all pupils' education, and schools should teach it using good practice to develop the wider curriculum. It is our aim to use PSHE to equip pupils with a sound understanding of risk and the knowledge and skills necessary to make safe and informed decisions.

The school curriculum and statutory guidance on relationships education, sex education (SRE), drug education, and financial education will be used to build upon the statutory content outlined in the national curriculum. All compulsory content will be age- and developmentally appropriate, taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents. It will always be provided with the aim of equipping pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

The new statutory guidance on Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) was published on July 15, 2025, and schools are given until September 1, 2026, to fully implement the changes.

As an independent school, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. We are also required to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. When teaching RSE, we will have regard to the new guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

In addition, The Wenlock School will:
- Ensure teaching is sensitive, inclusive, and age appropriate.
- Meet the needs of all pupils so they understand the importance of quality and respect.
- Work closely with parents and respect pupils' and parents' backgrounds and beliefs.
- Communicate the right to request withdrawal from some or all of the sex education.
- Ensure RSHE is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND.
- Teach about LGBT+ content at integrated and timely points.
- Model positive relationships within the staff and wider community.

The Wenlock School complies with the Equality Act 2010. We will not treat pupils with protected characteristics less favourably, make reasonable adjustments, and take positive action to alleviate disadvantage, being mindful of the SEND Code of Practice. An updated code of practice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has been submitted to the government, which reflects the Supreme Court ruling that "sex" in the Equality Act 2010 refers to biological sex. Our Accessibility Plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure positive action toward inclusivity.

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond appropriately so that pupils are fully informed and do not seek answers online. Staff will receive regular training on the PSHE and RSE curriculum and support strategies for effective and sensitive delivery.

4. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the PSHE curriculum. Biological aspects are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by experienced staff members and a trained health professional.

Primary: Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, including families and people who care for them, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships, and being safe. The new guidance for 2025 specifically recommends that primary schools teach sex education in Years 5 and/or 6. We believe children should participate in a programme of sex education before they transition into secondary school to enable them to be safe, have correct information and vocabulary, and make responsible choices about their health.

Secondary: RSE focuses on providing young people with the information they need to develop healthy, nurturing relationships. This includes families, respectful relationships, online and media safety, and intimate relationships, including sexual health. The new 2025 guidance adds content on misogyny, deepfakes, AI, and financial exploitation. It also provides new content on suicide prevention.

These areas are taught within the context of family life, ensuring there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND): All pupils at The Wenlock School have additional learning needs and an Education Health Care (EHC) Plan. Resources and the curriculum will be adapted as needed to ensure all pupils can fully access the PSHE and RSE curriculum.

5. Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Sex Education. The new guidance states that parents must be able to view all curriculum materials upon request.

Primary: Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Secondary: Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education, the school will arrange this. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form in Appendix 3.

6. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of PSHE and RSE as part of their induction and through the continuing professional development calendar. The government has announced that schools can apply for training grants from early 2026 to help staff tackle these subjects with confidence.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

The senior leadership team monitors the delivery of PSHE and RSE through comprehensive curriculum planning and quality assurance processes. Pupil progress is monitored by class teachers as part of the internal assessment system SOLAR. This policy is monitored on an annual basis.

Appendix 1: Curriculum Overview

2	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Primary KS2					
	Relationships			Living in the Wider World		Health and Wellbeing
Year 3	What makes a family; features of family life	Personal boundaries; safely responding to others; the impact of hurtful behaviour	Recognising respectful behaviour; the importance of self-respect; courtesy and being polite	The value of rules and laws; rights, freedoms and responsibilities	Living in the wider world. How the internet is used; assessing information online	Living in the wider world. Different jobs and skills; job stereotypes; setting personal goals	Health and Wellbeing. Health choices and habits; what affects feelings; expressing feelings	Health and Wellbeing. Personal strengths and achievements; managing and reframing setbacks	Health and Wellbeing. Risks and hazards; safety in the local environment and unfamiliar places
Year 4	Positive friendships, including online	Responding to hurtful behaviour; managing confidentiality; recognising risks online	Respecting differences and similarities; discussing difference sensitively	What makes a community; shared responsibilities	How data is shared and used	Making decisions about money; using and keeping money safe	Maintaining a balanced lifestyle; oral hygiene and dental care	Physical and emotional changes in puberty; external genitalia; personal hygiene routines; support with puberty.	Medicines and household products; drugs common to everyday life
Year 5	Managing friendships and peer influence	Physical contact and feeling safe	Responding respectfully to a wide range of people; recognising prejudice and discrimination	Protecting the environment; compassion towards others	How information online is targeted; different media types, their role and impact	Identifying job interests and aspirations; what influences career choices; workplace stereotypes	Healthy sleep habits; sun safety; medicines, vaccinations, immunisations and allergies	Personal identity; recognising individuality and different qualities; mental wellbeing	Keeping safe in different situations, including responding in emergencies, first aid and FGM
Year 6	Attraction to others; romantic relationships; civil partnership and marriage	Recognising and managing pressure; consent in different situations	Expressing opinions and respecting other points of view, including discussing topical issues	Valuing diversity; challenging discrimination and stereotypes	Evaluating media sources; sharing things online	Influences and attitudes to money; money and financial risks	What affects mental health and ways to take care of it; managing change, loss and bereavement; managing time online	Human reproduction and birth; increasing independence; managing transition	Keeping personal information safe; regulations and choices; drug use and the law; drug use and the media

	Secondary KS3					
	Independence and aspirations	Autonomy and advocacy	Choices and influences	Independence and aspirations	Autonomy and advocacy	Choices and influences
Year 7	Developing goal setting, organisation skills and self-awareness: • Personal identity and values • Learning skills and teamwork • Respect in school	Developing empathy, compassion, and communication: • Making and maintaining friendships • Identifying and challenging bullying • Communicating online	Developing agency, strategies to manage influence and decision. making: • Regulating emotions • Diet and exercise • Hygiene and	Developing self-confidence and self-worth: • Puberty and managing change • Body satisfaction and self-concept	Developing assertive communication, risk management and support-seeking skills: • Rights in the community • Relationship boundaries • Unwanted contact • FGM and forced marriage	Developing agency and decision making skills: • Drugs, alcohol and tobacco • Safety and first aid
Year 8	Developing risk management skills, analytical skills and strategies to identify bias: • Managing online presence • Digital and media literacy	Developing respect for beliefs, values and opinions and advocacy skills: • Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination • Promoting diversity and equality	Developing agency and strategies to manage influence and access support: • Drugs and alcohol • Introduction to contraception • Resisting peer influence • Online choices and influences	Developing goal setting, motivation and self-awareness: • Aspirations for the future • Career choices • Identity and the world of work	Developing communication and negotiation skills, clarifying values. and strategies to manage influence: • Healthy relationships • Boundaries and consent • LGBT+ inclusivity • 'Sexting' • Managing conflict	Developing agency and strategies to manage influence and access support: • Maintaining positive mental health • Importance of physical activity
Year 9	Developing goal setting, analytical skills and decision making: • GCSE options • Sources of careers advice • Employability	Setting goals Learning strengths, career options and goal setting as part of the GCSE options process. Developing self-confidence, risk management and strategies to manage influence: • Friendship challenges • Gangs and violent crime • Drugs and alcohol • Assertive communication • Financial exploitation	Developing empathy, compassion and strategies to access support: • Mental health (including self-harm and eating disorders) • Change, loss and bereavement • Healthy coping strategies	Independence and aspiration Developing analytical skills and strategies to identify bias and manage influence: • Financial decisions • Saving and borrowing • Gambling, financial choices and debt	Developing assertive communication, clarifying values and strategies to manage influence: • Healthy/unhealthy relationships • Consent • Relationships and sex in the media	Developing decision making, risk management and support-seeking skills: • Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) • Contraception • Cancer awareness • First aid

		Secondary KS4/5				
Year 10	**Independence and aspirations** Developing self-awareness, goal setting, adaptability and organisation skills: • Managing transition to key stage 4 including learning skills •Managing mental health concerns	**Autonomy and advocacy** Developing empathy and compassion, strategies to manage influence and assertive communication: • Relationship expectations • Impact of pornography • Identifying and responding to abuse and harassment	**Choices and influences** Developing agency, decision making and strategies to manage influence and access support: • First aid and lifesaving • Personal safety • Online relationships.	**Independence and aspirations** Developing goal setting, leadership and presentation skills: • Skills for employment • Applying for employment • Online presence and reputation	**Autonomy and advocacy** Developing respect for diversity, risk management and support-seeking skills: • Nature of committed relationships • Forced marriage • Diversity and discrimination • Extremism	**Choices and influences** Developing motivation, organisation, leadership and presentation skills • Preparation for, and reflection on, work experience
Year 11	**Independence and aspirations** Promoting self esteem and coping with stress Developing resilience and risk management skills: • Money management • Fraud and cybercrime • Preparing for adult life	**Autonomy and advocacy** Developing communication and negotiation skills, risk management and support-seeking skills: • Relationship values • Maintaining sexual health • Sexual health services • Managing relationship challenges and endings	**Choices and influences** Developing confidence, agency and support-seeking skills: • Making safe and healthy lifestyle choices • Health promotion and self examination • Blood, organ, stem cell donation	**Independence and aspirations** Developing empathy and compassion, clarifying values and support-seeking skills: • Families and parenting • Fertility, adoption, abortion • Pregnancy and miscarriage • Managing grief and loss	**Autonomy and advocacy** Developing confidence, self-worth, adaptability and decision-making skills: • Recognising and celebrating successes • Transition and new opportunities • Aligning actions with goals	**Study leave**
Year 12	**Health and Wellbeing** Mental health and emotional wellbeing: • Mental health and emotional wellbeing • Managing stress • Body image • Healthy coping strategies	**Living in the wider world** Readiness for work: • Career opportunities • Preparing for the world of work	**Relationships** Diversity and inclusion: • Living in a diverse society • Challenging prejudice and discrimination	**Living in the wider world** Planning for the future: • Exploring future opportunities • Post-18 options • The impact of financial decisions	**Relationships** Respectful relationships: • Consent • Assertive communication • Positive relationships and recognising abuse • Strategies for managing dangerous situations or relationships	**Health and Wellbeing** Health choices and safety: • Independence and keeping safe • Travel • First aid • The impact of substance use
Year 13	**Health and Wellbeing** Independence • Responsible health choices • Managing change • Health and wellbeing, including sexual health, into adulthood	**Living in the wider world** Next steps • Application processes • Future opportunities and career development • Maintaining a positive professional identity	**Relationships** • Intimate relationships •Personal values, including in relation to contraception and sexual health. •Fertility •Pregnancy	**Living in the wider world** • Financial choices • Managing money • Financial contracts • Budgeting • Saving • Debt • Influences on financial choices	**Relationships** • Building and maintaining relationships •New friendships and relationships, including in the workplace. •Personal safety •Intimacy •Conflict resolution •Relationship changes	Study Leave

Appendix 2: National Curriculum Aims

At the end of Primary, pupils should know:

Families and people who care about me.

- That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

Caring friendships

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- The characteristics of friendships include mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- Healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

Respectful relationships

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or background), or making different choices or having different preferences or beliefs.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- The conventions of courtesy and manners
- The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
- 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 those in positions of authority.

- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

- People sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone they are not.
- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online, including when we are anonymous.
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- How information and data is shared and used online

Being safe

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard
- How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

At the end of Secondary, pupils should know:

Families

- There are different types of committed stable relationships.
- How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children
- What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony?
- 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 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

Respectful relationships, including friendships.

- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) include 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

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, include that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- About online risks, including 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)

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.

- 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.

- 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 behavior

- How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

Appendix 3: RSE Withdraw Request

Name of child:

Form Group:

Name of Parent/Carer:

Date:

Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education.

Any other information you would like the school to consider.

Parent/Carer Signature: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL

Agreed actions from discussion with parents/carers:

Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken:

Headteacher Signature: _____