

The Wren School

Relationships and Sex Education policy

Purpose and Background

The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE (Relationships Education, Relationships, and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019)) must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. At The Wren School, relationships and sex education (RSE) involves lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity. (DfEE Guidance 0116/2000/2019)

Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their students' wellbeing, and under the Education Act (1996) to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. A comprehensive RSE programme can have a positive impact on students' health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.

The Department of Health (DoH) sets out its ambition for all children and young people to receive high quality sex and relationships education in the Sexual Health Improvement Framework (2013), while the Department for Education's (DfE) paper, The Importance of Teaching (2010) highlighted that 'Children need high quality sex and relationships education so they can make wise and informed choices'.

At The Wren School some aspects of RSE are taught in science, and others are taught as part of the whole school personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme.

The Wren School intends that its programme of RSE should provide accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

This policy takes account of all relevant legislation.

Government guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 which are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. To give effect to the duty in section 34 of the 2017 Act and the power in section 35 of that Act, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 amend existing provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Act 2002 and insert new provisions into the education of young people. The new provisions include:

- a requirement for the Secretary of State to publish guidance on Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education; and

- require schools to have regard to that guidance; require schools to make a statement of policy on their provision of Relationships Education and RSE; and set out the circumstances in which a student is to be excused from RSE.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

See associated documents for further linked guidance.

Policy objectives

- to fulfil the legal and statutory requirements for the delivery of RSE;
- to provide an inclusive RSE programme that takes account of the needs of each student;
- to improve students' knowledge and understanding about sex and relationships, and to offer guidance about varied attitudes and values, so as to foster strong personal and social skills;
- to provide guidance for staff, students and parents/carers on dealing with sensitive issues within the RSE framework;
- to establish school procedures for parents'/carers' request to withdrawal.

Management of the policy

School	This policy is implemented and managed by the headteacher
Governing body	The Local Governing Board will review and update this policy every three years in line with all relevant legislation.
Approval	Approved by Local Governing Board - July 2019
Next review due	July 2022

Associated policies

Anti-bullying

Curriculum statement

Equal Opportunities

Personal Social and Health Education

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Transgender

Practice and procedures

The RSE programme reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the following values:

- respect for self;
- respect for others;
- responsibility for one's own actions;
- responsibility for one's family, friends, school and wider community.

The school recognises that RSE must be taught across all year groups. Parents/carers wishing to see the RSE programme may do so by contacting the school's Headteacher. Parents/carers will be

informed when RSE is being delivered, with an invitation to support the work by discussing issues at home. In line with legislation, parents/carers will be given the right to withdraw their son/daughter from RSE lessons that are supplementary to the requirements of the science national curriculum.

Right to request to be withdrawn

Parents/carers have the **right to request** that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Health Education. Following the guidance from the Department for Education, a parent/carer has the right to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive Relationships and Health Education, they may choose to receive the curriculum planned lessons without parent/carer consent.

There is no **right** to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Religion and belief systems

At The Wren School, the religious background of all students will be considered when planning teaching, so that the topics included in the core content are appropriately handled. This will comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics. The Wren School is a non-faith school and therefore will not teach topics from the PSHEE or the Relationship and Health Education from any one faith perspective.

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 part of the curriculum will help young people to know what is right and wrong by law. 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 will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including, for example:

- marriage;
- consent, including the age of consent;
- violence against women and girls;
- 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/radicalization;

- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or ‘county lines’ drugs operations);
- hate crime;
- female genital mutilation (FGM).

RSE and equal opportunities

The Wren School is committed to working towards equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life including the teaching of sex education.

We are aware that our students may have varying needs regarding sex education depending on their circumstances and background. The school believes that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the school’s approach to RSE will take account of:

- Ethnic and cultural diversity – Different ethnic and cultural groups have different attitudes to RSE.
- A variety of home backgrounds – We recognise that our students may come from a variety of different family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- Sexuality – Our approach to sex education will include a sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall also actively address homophobic bullying.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability– We will take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional, physical or behavioural difficulties that result in particular RSE needs.
- Gender – In general, girls tend to have greater access to RSE, both through the media and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

Dealing with sensitive issues

Teachers need to be sure that they are aware of potentially sensitive issues which may arise from the teaching and learning of RSE. The following protocols should be applied when delivering the curriculum to young people:

- no individual (staff or student) will have to answer a personal question;
- no individual will have to take part in a discussion about sex and relationships;
- the correct scientific names for body parts will be used;
- meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way;
- teachers will use their professional discretion in responding to questions, and may refer the individual to another member of staff or outside agency.

Personal disclosures

If a teacher begins a discussion with a student about personal matters concerning sex and relationships, they may seek advice from a colleague, prior to continuing that discussion.

If a member of staff is concerned about any disclosure or other sensitive issue, then they should follow the school’s safeguarding and child protection policy, if necessary seeking advice from the school’s designated person for child protection.

More detailed guidance about dealing with confidentiality is provided in Section 7 of the Sex and Relationship Education circular 0116/2000 (see Appendix A for The Wren School's Confidentiality statement). It is only in the most exceptional cases that schools should be in the position of having to handle confidential information without parental knowledge.

Use of outside agencies and visiting speakers

The Wren School will occasionally invite local experts into school to deliver part of the RSE programme. This may involve health workers, school nurses and other professionals. All visiting speakers will be asked to conform to the following procedures:

- visitors will contribute to the programme at the invitation of the school and must be qualified to make a relevant contribution;
- visitors must be fully briefed on the school's programme for RSE and the context of their delivery;
- visitors must agree with the aims of the school in delivering its RSE policy;
- visitors will follow the school's safeguarding procedures in the event of a disclosure.

Associated documents

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance);
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline) ;
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between students) ;
- Equality Act 2010 and TWS's Safeguarding Policy;
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance);
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance);
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools);
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying);
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools);
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts);
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC education));
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development);
- National Citizen Service guidance for schools;
- Children Act (2004);
- Education Act (1993 and 1996);

- Sexual Health Improvement Framework (DoH, 2013);
- The Importance of Teaching (DfE, 2010);
- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfEE Circular 0116/2000);
- Sex and Relationship Education For the 21st Century (core document of the PSHE association and Sex Education Forum);
- Sex Education Forum fact sheet 23 (Guidance and policy on RSE in secondary schools);
- Policy Statement: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (DfE, 2017);
- Relationships Education, Relationships, and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019).

Appendices

Appendix A – Confidentiality statement

Appendix A – The Wren School Confidentiality statement

Children are taught about confidentiality during PSHE and, through good practice across the school, children will be made aware that issues of a sensitive nature are discussed in private.

Apart from issues arising from everyday life, this statement relates to all policies where confidentiality is paramount e.g. Equal Opportunities, Anti-Bullying and Child Protection.

Students and parents/carers are aware of the school's commitment to confidentiality through the school website.

Any issue can be discussed in private but confidentiality cannot be assured unconditionally unless it is to the child's benefit. The teacher will reassure students that their best interests will be maintained. Students are informed of sources of confidential help, for example the school nurse or school counsellor.

Children will be encouraged to seek support from their parents/carers and, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed and appropriate support given.

Any confidentiality related to child protection will follow the procedures in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Children are made aware of sources of help e.g. Childline, NSPCC, school nurse, mentors etc.

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. It forms part of the universal safeguarding training that all staff complete and refresh regularly. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the student. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, since, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Person (DP) and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities. Students can be reassured that only the people who "need to know" will be informed, that this will be the minimum necessary and that information will not become common knowledge.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only as per the 'Working together to safeguard children' advice. Where information is shared with appropriate staff they must maintain the confidentiality outlined in the previous paragraph. Information will only be shared with agencies who the school has a statutory duty to share with.

Staff responsibilities

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this they will:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems;
- plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe;

- attend relevant training;
- maintain a vigilant attitude;
- record their concerns if they are worried about a child and report these to the relevant person using CPOMS as soon as practical that day;
- treat information with confidentiality but never promising to “keep a secret”;
- in the context of early help, staff will notify colleagues and/or parents/carers of any concerns about their child(ren), and provide them with, or signpost them to, opportunities to change the situation;
- liaise with other agencies that support students and provide early help;
- ensure they know who the DP and deputy DP are and know how to contact them.

Governor responsibilities

Governors will not be given details relating to individual children or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached. They will be given anonymised information where relevant to their role within the governing board.