Pendle
Education Trust

Policy/Procedure/Guideline Review

Policy/Procedure/Guideline:	Relationships & Sex Education Policy
Senior Manager Responsible:	The Principal
Approval:	October 2026
Review date:	Annually

Contents

1. Statement of Intent
2. Legal Framework
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. RSE policy development
5. Definition
6. Organisation of RSE curriculum
7. RSE subject overview
8. Delivery of the RSE curriculum
9. Curriculum links
10. Working with parents
11. Working with external agencies
12. Withdrawal from lessons
13. Equality and inclusion
14. Safeguarding and confidentiality
15. Staff training
16. Monitoring & Review

1. Statement of intent

At West Craven High School, we understand the importance of educating our pupils about sex and relationships and their health, in order for them to make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives. We believe that our high quality Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) will stay with our students for life. RSE is **not** about encouraging teenagers to become sexually active nor is it about promoting any particular lifestyle of relationship choice. RSE is about providing students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make safe, healthy and informed relationship choices as young people and in the future as adults. RSE at West Craven High School is pioneering an innovative curriculum fit for the world our young people are living in. We believe in empowering our students to understand their bodies, to reflect on their relationship values and to be able to openly discuss relationships and sex. We believe that this approach will reduce the risk of unhealthy and abusive relationships. At West Craven High School we are committed to the important role that RSE plays in students' holistic education and we aim to build on the RSE programmes covered in primary school.

Our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education programme aims to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- 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
- Help students understand how important it is to be healthy, both physically and mentally
- Provide an environment where students can understand about, and can articulate, the importance of emotional and physical wellbeing.
- Provide pupils with high-quality, evidence-based, age-appropriate teaching of these subjects.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Equality Act 2010
'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2026)
Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2025, statutory from September 2026)
'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study' (DfE, 2015)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

Behaviour policy
SEND policy (including SEMH)
E-safety policy
Equal Opportunities policy
Anti-Bullying policy
Safeguarding policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

- The governing board will approve the RSE and Health Education policy, and hold the Principal to account for its implementation

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE and Health Education are taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw from non-statutory components of RSE.

- The PSHE subject leader is responsible for:
    - Overseeing the delivery of RSE and Health Education
    - Ensuring no duplication of content between curriculum areas
    - Ensuring the curriculum is age-appropriate and high-quality
    - Monitoring teaching and learning
    - Ensuring continuity and progression between each year group
    - Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in RSE and Health Education
    - Ensuring teachers are provided with high-quality lesson plans and resources to support the teaching of the curriculum
    - Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to RSE and Health

Education

- Leading staff meetings and CPD
- Ensuring the correct standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance

- Form tutors are responsible for:
  - Acting in accordance with, and promoting this policy
  - Delivering RSE and Health Education in a sensitive way
  - Modelling positive attitudes to RSE and Health Education
  - Monitoring progress
  - Responding to the needs of individual pupils and adapting lessons accordingly
  - Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from non-statutory components of RSE and Health Education, providing them with alternative education opportunities
  - Liaising with the PSHE subject leader about key topics, resources and support for individuals
  - Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of RSE and Health Education to the PSHE subject leader or a member of the SLT
  - Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the DSL

- The member of teaching staff responsible for RSE and Health Education is Max Foulds, line managed by Assistant Principal Paul Morrison (lead for personal development).

- The DSL is responsible for:
  - Offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSE curriculum
  - Promoting knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff
  - Being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a child that have arisen through the teaching of RSE.

- The SENDCO is responsible for:
  - Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs
  - Advising staff on the use of TAs in order to meet pupils' individual needs
  -
- The RSHE curriculum forms part of the school's safeguarding provision by helping pupils recognise unhealthy relationships, sexual harassment, exploitation, online harms and situations where support should be sought from a trusted adult.

4. RSE policy development

All schools providing secondary education are required to deliver statutory RSE Education.

The RSE and Health Education curriculum has been developed in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents and in accordance with DfE recommendations.

We have gathered the views of teachers, pupils and parents in the following ways:

- Parent consultation
- Staff consultation
- Student voice

Once amendments were made, this policy was reviewed and ratified by governors.

5. Definition

For the purposes of this policy, 'relationships and sex education' (RSE) is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

6. Organisation of RSE curriculum

The majority of the RSE and Health Education curriculum will be delivered through PSHE lessons, with some statutory elements taught within the Science curriculum. Some RSE content will also be delivered through planned events and speakers.

The PSHE subject leader will work closely with colleagues to ensure the content of the RSE and Health Education programme of study complements other areas of the curriculum and does not duplicate. The school will consider the context and views of the wider local community as well as local topical issues when developing the curriculum to ensure it is reflective of issues in the local area and is responsive to needs within the school community.

The school will consider the religious background of all pupils when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

7. RSE subject overview

RSE content will continue to build on pupils' knowledge of topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined below.

Families

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- That 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 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), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (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

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- Their 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

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- 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

By the end of secondary school, pupils will know:

- 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, the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women, and the menopause.
- 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 behaviour.
- How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

Health Education Subject Overview

Health Education content will continue to build on pupils' knowledge of topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined below.

Mental Wellbeing

- How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- That happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- Common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).
- How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

Internet safety and harms

- The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling (including the accumulation of debt), how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
- How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
- The curriculum will also address emerging online risks including artificial intelligence (AI), deepfakes, misinformation and disinformation. Pupils will be taught how these may affect relationships, wellbeing, decision-making and personal safety.

Physical health and fitness

- The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health (including cancer and cardio- vascular ill-health).
- About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating

- How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use and the associated risks (including the link to serious mental health conditions).
- The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
- The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the

benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.

Health and prevention

- About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- The benefits of regular self-examination and screening (late secondary)
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

Basic first aid

- Basic treatment for common injuries.
- Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

Changing adolescent body

- Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

8. Delivery of the RSE curriculum

The majority of the RSE and Health Education curriculum will be delivered during PSHE lessons, once per week. These take place Monday period 1 and are delivered by form tutors. All PSHE lessons will occur at the same time in school in order to allow monitoring by Senior Leaders.

Through effective organisation and delivery of the subject, we will ensure that:

- The statutory content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of study.

- A spiral curriculum will ensure the interleaving of key information across the curriculum, as well as repetition of key themes and priorities with increasing complexity.

- RSE will be delivered in a non-judgmental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.

- Teaching of the curriculum reflects legal requirements, with particular regard to the Equality Act 2010, so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.

- Students are taught that different people make different choices in relation to their identity and sexual orientation; students are taught what it means to be part of the LGBTQ+ community and, that at West Craven we respect difference.

- All teaching and learning resources are assessed by the PSHE subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any SEND, if applicable.

- Classes may be taught in gender-segregated groups dependent on the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, where it is only appropriate to discuss the body in single gender groups.

- For each year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to support learning. Inappropriate images, videos etc will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of pupils.

- As always, pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning.

- Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and accurately, whilst remaining objective.

- Teachers will focus on the importance of healthy, positive relationships when teaching RSE, with sensitivity given so as not to stigmatise pupils on the basis of their home circumstances.

- Teachers will ensure that perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics are challenged through the promotion of mutual respect for those who are different to themselves.

- In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics, such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear to be instructive rather than preventative.

- On an annual basis, parents will be informed of curriculum coverage, and will be given the opportunity for consultation.

See full curriculum plan – Appendix 1

9. Curriculum Links

PSHE: Pupils are provided with the knowledge, skills and understanding to help prepare them to play a full and active part in society, including an understanding of democracy, how laws are made and upheld, and how make good decisions.

Science: Pupils are taught the following;

- about the main external parts of the body and the changes to the human body as it grows and goes through puberty.
- the differences between biological sex and gender identity.
- the short and long term effects of diet and lifestyle choices such as use of drugs, alcohol, nicotine and tobacco.
- about how vaccinations work to prevent the spread of communicable diseases and about the wider debate about vaccines in our society.
- how to prevent the spread of some sexually transmitted diseases, including gonnorrhea and HIV/AIDS
- different types of contraception and how they work

PE: Pupils develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and lead active, healthy lives.

ICT and Computing: Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online and the different risks they may face online as they get older.

10. Working with parents

The school understands that parents' role in the development of their children's understanding about relationships and health is vital.

The school will consult with parents regarding the RSE and Health Education curriculum and will provide:

- Information about the curriculum content, including what will be taught and when
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE and health education
- Opportunities to ask questions about the school's approach to RSE and health education

The school understands that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents. These may be submitted by email and a meeting will be arranged with the relevant member of staff.

11. Working with external agencies

Working with external agencies can enhance the delivery of RSE and brings in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. They will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

The school will check any visitors' credentials and ensure that any planned content is age- appropriate and accessible for all pupils.

The school will ensure the visitor understands how safeguarding procedures must take place, in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will use visitors to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of teaching staff, not to replace teaching by those staff.

12. Withdrawal from lessons

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programmes.

Requests to withdraw a child from sex education will be made in writing to the Principal.

Before granting a withdrawal request, the Principal will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, the child, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record.

The Principal will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have.

Following discussions with parents, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive RSE rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with RSE.

Pupils who are withdrawn from RSE will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal.

For requests concerning the withdrawal of a pupil with SEND, the Principal may take the pupils' specific needs into account when making their decision.

Parents and carers may request further information about the RSHE curriculum and, where appropriate, may view curriculum materials used to support teaching and learning.

13. Equality and inclusion

The school will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against pupils because of their:

- Age

- Sex
- Race
- Disability

- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

The school will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of its pupils and determine whether additional support is necessary for pupils with the above protected characteristics.

The school understands that pupils with SEND are entitled to learn about RSE and health education, and the curriculum will be designed to be inclusive for all pupils.

The school is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Teachers will liaise with the SENCO in order to adapt planning or work appropriately.

Where planning and resources are adapted, teachers will ensure teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered in reference to the law.

The school will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and challenge any perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic.

The school will be actively aware of issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and dealt with in accordance with the school Behaviour Policy.

The school will make clear that sexual violence and harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or harassment will be handled in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

14. Safeguarding and confidentiality

All pupils will be taught how to keep themselves safe, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

To meet DfE best practice advice, the DSL will be involved in the formulation of safeguarding related areas of the curriculum, as their knowledge and resources may help to address safeguarding issues more appropriately and effectively.

When teaching issues that are particularly sensitive for pupils of all ages, e.g. self-harm or suicide, teachers will be made aware of the risks of inadvertently encouraging, or providing instructions to pupils. Teaching of these subjects will always prioritise preventing self-harm or suicide as a central

goal.

Confidentiality within the classroom is an important component of RSE and health education. Teachers are expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils in compliance with the Safeguarding Policy (available on the school website).

Teachers will understand that some aspects of RSE may lead to a pupil raising a safeguarding concern, for example; a disclosure of abuse. If a disclosure is made, the DSL will be alerted straight away. Pupils will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report, and how their report will be handled. This includes the process for when they have a concern about a peer.

15. Staff training

Training will be provided by the PSHE lead teacher to the relevant members of staff to make sure they are up-to-date with the RSE and health education curriculum.

Teaching staff will be made aware of any updated guidance on the curriculum and any new legal developments eg. 'sexting' or 'up-skirting'.

Appropriately trained staff will be able to give pupils information on where and how to obtain confidential advice, counselling and treatment.

16. Monitoring & review

The SLT link for PHSE is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subject. They will look at a mixture of;

- Link Meetings
- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Student Voice
- Lesson planning scrutiny
- Curriculum Area Review & Evaluation (CARE)

The subject leader, Max Foulds, will work closely with their SLT link through review meetings to evaluate the effectiveness of the subject and implement any changes.

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal in conjunction with the PSHE subject leaders on an annual basis.

Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programmes, will be implemented by the Principal.

Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff and, where necessary,

parents and pupils, involved in the RSE and health education curriculum.

The next scheduled review date of this policy is September 2027. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body and the Principal.