Woodlands

Respect ***Resilience*** ***Responsibility***

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Woodlands Statement of Policy on:

Relationships and Sex Education

1. Introduction

We define Relationships and Sex education (RSE) as part of our curriculum which explores the physical, emotional, social, moral and legal dimensions of relationships and sexuality, as well as the factual teaching of sex and sexual health. An effective RSE curriculum will stimulate a students' moral and emotional development in order for them to understand their own and others' sexuality, and how to develop happy and healthy relationships. RSE aims to develop a student's personal values, their respect of themself and others, and their decision-making through puberty and adulthood, enabling them to develop relationships in a respectful, healthy and responsible manner. The RSE curriculum has a strong focus on the meaning of consent, which is built into every year group's topic on relationships, and also aims to raise students' awareness of modern digital threats (such as AI chatbots, deepfakes, sextortion etc). Our RSE programme is underpinned by our school's core values: 'respect, responsibility and resilience'.

We believe RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the learning process, beginning in childhood and continuing into adult life with the content of our RSE curriculum supporting the wider work of Woodlands in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society
- Be for all children, young people and adults, including those with physical, learning or emotional difficulties
- Be ambitious and responsive in meeting and addressing the needs of our students and the world we live in
- Encourage the exploration of values and moral issues, consideration of sexuality and personal relationships and the development of communications and decision-making skills
- Foster self-esteem, self-awareness and a sense of moral responsibility to avoid and resist unwanted sexual experiences.

2. Aims of RSE

Woodlands Community College believe that RSE is not only an educational entitlement of all pupils, but an integral part of each pupil's personal development.

The broad aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our college are to:

- Ensure that mental wellbeing is central to these subjects. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely or experiencing periods of poor mental health. The aim of our RSE subject content is to give students the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and to know when and

how to seek out support if problems arise. This includes times when a young person might experience difficulty coping with change, loss and bereavement.

- Provide a framework and platform for students to explore, challenge and develop their understanding of RSE through sensitive student- led discussions, in an environment underpinned by our values, 'Respect, Responsibility and Resilience'
- Develop the knowledge and skills in pupils to prepare them for puberty as well as in later years, specifically providing them with an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene. The programme will also enable students to learn about endometriosis and the menopause.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, underwritten by our school's values: Respect, Responsibility; Resilience
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies as well as to teach them the social and morale responsibilities they have in regards to relationships and consent
- To help pupils to manage change, become independent and to explore stereotypes
- To recognise the value of stable family life and the responsibilities of parenthood
- To provide support and information for young people and their parents during their secondary years.

3. Parental Partnership

We believe an effective RSE program is shaped by the needs of students within a school community, adheres to statutory guidance, and uses regular stakeholder input to develop high quality learning experiences and personal development for all. We regularly gauge the opinion of our students and their parents through Pupil Voice questionnaires and Parent Perceptions Weeks. We really value this feedback from parents and students in all areas of school life and ensure we inform students and parents of any improvements we make as a consequence through our "You said, we did" feedback following questionnaires and School Council meetings

We are committed to providing our parents with:

- The RSE curriculum map on our website
- Annual consultation on the content, delivery and resources used to deliver the programme
- A forum through which parents can receive advice or more information on RSE, and understand how to access external help
- Access to resources used in school
- The right to withdraw their child from sex education*

*Parents have the right to request their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education. The process for withdrawing a child from sex education is detailed below:

1. Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to contact the school directly in order to allow a member of the senior leadership team to clearly explain the value of sex education to the child.
2. Once discussions have taken place and are recorded in writing, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.
3. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.
4. In the case of a child being withdrawn from sex education, the child will be supervised but expected to work independently during this time.
5. Should a child miss the vast majority (60%) of sex education lessons, a letter will be sent to the parent and child detailing a sex education 'catch up' workshop for the relevant workshop, likely to take place in the summer term.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, in the case of point 3 occurring, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs into account when making this decision.

4. Policy development

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

1. Review and design: The Lead Teacher and Line Manager for RSE reviewed and used national and local, statutory and non-statutory, guidance and evidenced based best practice to inform this policy.
2. Pupil consultation: Pupils were asked to provide feedback on the proposed RSE curriculum and to review whether it meets the needs of young people as they develop through school. The process of review is an ongoing one as students complete an evaluation of the content delivered at the end of the topic.
3. Staff consultation: All relevant school staff are given the opportunity to review the RSE provision annually, most recently during July 2026, with all appropriate feedback being used to develop this policy. Due consideration was also given to DFE's RSE and Health Education: Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers (July 2026) to ensure the curriculum we deliver continues to give our students the knowledge and skills to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. Wherever possible RSE is delivered by tutors as part of the PSHE curriculum, a decision taken in 2023 in light of tutors having good relationships with their students and students therefore feeling comfortable discussing topics openly with them.

All four stages of our RSE consultation process will be repeated annually, with both staff and students carrying out evaluation and feedback to help refine resources, content and delivery. In addition, teacher review and evaluation of adaptations made for students in nurture groups and those accessing Alternative Provision will take place regularly throughout the year and influence the implementation of the RSE policy, as well as to ensure we meet the needs of our pupils.

5. Policy review

This policy will undergo annual parental consultation. The RSE policy will be reviewed and ratified annually by our governors in the Autumn term, unless government recommendations or changes to the law require otherwise.

Throughout the year, student and teacher review will be used to inform changes to the implementation of the RSE curriculum in order to maximise its impact on all pupils' learning and engagement. In addition, our Lead Teacher of PSHE may react to any developing detrimental trends in local health or social behaviours, by adapting the curriculum map and its implementation according to evidence and need.

The up-to-date RSE policy will be on our school's website and all parents and carers are able to provide their feedback at any time. This feedback will be collated and reviewed appropriately.

6. Implementation and Monitoring of RSE

a) RSE is led by the Lead Teacher of PSHE and line-managed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

b) All students across all year groups receive one hour of timetabled PSHE per fortnight. The RSE curriculum is implemented within PSHE (see Appendix A). Pupils are taught in mixed ability and mixed gender tutor groups by their own tutor, wherever possible. Furthermore, the implementation of the Science curriculum contributes to the delivery of RSE.

c) Our Period R (Tutor Programme) is also used to support the RSE curriculum. Activities are carefully planned to compliment and revisit age specific RSE lesson misconceptions and content. In addition, an activity is in place within the Period R programme in the week following the PSHE lesson, for students to revisit the theme and hold further discussions around it and put a key question to the vote (known as Voting Voice)

d) We recognise that young people will bring prior learning and real-life experiences to their learning. We aim to respect and build on these. The delivery of RSE will respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example students' sexual orientation, gender identity, faith or culture (which may, depending on their age and maturity, not be something they have yet considered or may be emerging) or the sexual orientation, gender identity, faith or culture of their immediate family, close friends and wider community. Students with SEND study RSE in line with their peers, with careful consideration given to differentiate and pitch learning

which is appropriate for every student's cognitive ability and social and emotional development.

e) A wide range of teaching resources will be used and are available to parents on request. Our website includes the PSHE curriculum overview showing what is being taught each half term. Elements of the RSE curriculum are also included within the Child Development course, with parents informed of the course content by the Lead Teacher for that area

f) Outside agencies may deliver targeted content within our RSE curriculum map, subject to compliance with our college's risk assessment. These agencies are listed on the school's website for our parents to view. Parents are encouraged to contact outside agencies to receive support as appropriate.

g) Tutors are responsible for teaching RSE as part of the PSHE curriculum with resources and support provided by the Lead Teacher for PSHE, Sarah Lambeth, although outside agencies may be responsible for the delivery of particular sessions as and when required.

h) Monitoring of the implementation of RSE will take place through our whole school teaching and learning monitoring structure, which includes lesson observations, drop-ins and monitoring carried out by the Lead Teacher of PSHE, the SLT Lead for PSHE as well as Year Leaders.

i) The impact of RSE will be evaluated through student feedback in lessons, including Q&A, discussions and self-reflections. In addition, a system of teacher and student evaluations will inform the future planning of the curriculum.

7. <u>The content of our RSE curriculum</u>

a) Knowledge and decision making

By the end of their time in the college, pupils should be able to:

- recognise the influences and pressures around sexual behaviour, respond appropriately and confidently seek professional health advice
- manage emotions associated with changing relationships with parents and friends
- see both sides of an argument and express and justify a personal opinion
- have the determination to stand up for their beliefs and values
- make informed choices about the pattern of their lifestyle which promote well-being
- have the confidence to assert themselves and challenge offending behaviour
- develop qualities of empathy and sympathy and the ability to respond emotionally to the range and depth of feelings within close relationships
- work co-operatively with a range of people who are different from themselves.
- Be knowledgeable on the topic of consent, what it means in terms of the law and in practice

Pupils will also understand:

- the specific dangers of misusing alcohol and drugs in relation to driving, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections
- personal safety, including knife crime awareness
- the demographic trends in relation to STIs, for example Chlamydia.
- how the different forms of contraception work, to inform future choices
- what is meant by safe sex and safer sex
- the way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of the sex hormones*
- some medical uses of hormones including the control and promotion of fertility*
- how sex is determined by humans*
- how HIV and other sexually transmitted infections affect the body
- the impact of endometriosis and menopause (on the body and mind)
- the link between eating disorders and self-image and sexual identity
- the risks of early sexual activity and the link with the use of alcohol
- how the different forms of contraception work and where to get advice
- the role of statutory and voluntary organisations
- the law in relation to sexual activity for young people and adults
- how their own identity is influenced by both their personal values and those of their family and society

- how to respond appropriately within a range of social relationships
- how to access the statutory and voluntary agencies which support relationships in crisis
- the qualities of good parenting and its value to family life
- the benefits of marriage or a stable partnership in bringing up children
- the way different forms of relationship including marriage depend on maturity and commitment for their success.

(* denotes taught in Science Curriculum)

By the end of their time in the college, pupils will have considered:

- their developing sense of sexual identity and feel confident and comfortable with it
- how personal, family and social values influence behaviour
- the arguments around moral issues such as abortion, contraception and the age of consent
- the consequences of early sexual activity
- the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of contraception in terms of personal preference and social implications
- how to handle unwanted attention, including online
- modern digital threats including AI chatbots, deepfakes, pornography, sextortion, scams, fraud and extortion
- personal preference and social implications
- the individual implications made by partners in a sustained relationship and how these can be of joy or benefit to both
- the consequence of close relationships including having children and how this will create family ties which impact on their lives and those of others
- how to evaluate readiness for parenthood and positive parenting qualities

- the possibilities of adoption and fostering
- the impact of change, loss and bereavement including abortion.

b) Values and Beliefs

As well as knowledge and information, pupils will be encouraged to consider the importance of the following values:

- respecting and valuing themselves and others,
- showing understanding and sensitivity towards the needs and views of others,
- developing a sense of responsibility for their own actions,
- developing a sense of responsibility towards the school, their family and the wider community.

c) Skills and Abilities

Pupils will develop the following:

- Active listening
- Team working
- Independence
- Critical thinking
- Self-managing skills
- Reflection
- Debating
- Communication- including the making and keeping of relationships
- Identifying and assessing risk
- Decision-making
- Resourcefulness- understanding how to access external help
- Recognising and using opportunities to develop a healthy lifestyle

More detailed information can be found in schemes of work.

8. Specific Issues

The following issues may arise throughout a pupil's education at Woodlands. Staff, parents and pupils need to understand the school's procedures.

a) Confidentiality and advice

- Teachers are not allowed to give one-to-one sex and relationship advice
- Teachers are not allowed to give confidentiality over child protection issues
- Visiting speakers will abide by the above
- No Limits are able to give confidential advice around sex and relationships but have a duty of care to report any safeguarding concerns.

Pupils will be made aware that some information cannot be held as confidential, and made to understand that, if certain disclosures are made, certain actions will ensue.

At the same time, pupils will be offered appropriate support. The following procedures will be adhered to by all adults.

Disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse – the school's safeguarding procedures will be invoked (see policy). Staff receive regular child protection training to ensure they are fully aware of the procedures which must be adhered to in order to keep children safe.

Disclosure of pregnancy or advice on contraception – it is hoped that the following procedure will ensure that pupils who are in difficulty know that they can talk to an adult in school and that they will be supported.

1. The DSL must be informed of the pregnancy immediately.
2. Professional information and guidance will always be sought from a health professional.
3. The college will always encourage pupils to talk with their parents/carers first:
4. Pupils should be asked whether they can tell their parent(s) or carer(s) and whether they want help in doing so. If this takes place, subsequent responsibility then lies with the parent(s) or carer(s). Staff should check that this has taken place.
5. If pupils refuse to tell their parent(s) or carer(s), DSLs will consult with relevant health professionals and other staff, e.g. Year Leader or Assistant Year Leader about informing the parent(s) or carer(s).

(b) Family Life

The value of family life and the importance of developing stable, loving relationships will be emphasised throughout the RSE programme. Pupils will be encouraged to consider the qualities and relationships between groups of people, with an emphasis on stability, respect, and caring and supportive behaviour.

(c) As part of the RSE programme, issues of contraception, HIV/AIDS, sexuality and abortion will be addressed. Facts will be presented in an objective and balanced way, with pupils being encouraged to consider their attitudes and values within the agreed framework set out within this Policy.

(d) Complaints Procedures

Any complaints about the sex education programme should be made to the Head Teacher who will report it to the Governors.

(e) <u>Dissemination of the policy</u>

This policy will be available to all stakeholders on our school website. Arrangements will be made to inform and update governors, staff and visitors working within relevant curriculum areas, of the content of this Policy. This will include INSET with appropriate staff (including Child Protection and Prevent training as part of the

induction for new staff and an annual update for all staff at Woodlands), as well as any necessary updates in staff briefing sessions and emails.