

# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Leigh Academy Marden



Leigh Academy  
**Marden**

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| 01/09/25    | 1.3               | Policy reviewed and updated to reflect new guidance. |

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**Leigh Academy Marden considers that Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is an integral part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship curriculum, and is linked to that for Science. This is covered using the IB Primary Years Programme. We aim to offer pupils a carefully planned programme on human development, relationships, and family life within a safe, supportive atmosphere. We also see this as a fundamental part of safeguarding the children within our care.**

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## **1. Aims:**

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are 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.

## **2. Statutory requirements**

As a primary academy school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#) and [the DFE Statutory Guidance : Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education 2019](#)

At Leigh Academy Marden, we ensure coverage of the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to comply with the [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At Leigh Academy Marden we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

## **3. 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 – a member of staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE

5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

## 4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, changes, how humans reproduce, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It is a key aspect of safeguarding children by developing their understanding of the world and keeping themselves safe.

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

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

## 5. Curriculum

EYFS requirements are covered in the EYFS curriculum. At Marden, we teach RSE as an integral part of a planned PSHE curriculum.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, considering the developmental age, needs and feelings of pupils.

*Primary sex education* will take place in Year 6 and will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings (reviewing learning from Year 4 and 5)
- How a baby is conceived and born.

We will inform parents when this aspect of sex education will be taught in advance. This is to enable parents to discuss specific concerns with the class teacher or Principal or to consider whether to exercise their right to withdraw from these lessons.

Parents/carers are welcome to view any of the teaching resources for these lessons prior to the session taking place. If they wish to do so, they should speak to the class teacher who will be able to share these with them.

## 6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions that are developmentally appropriate for the cohort.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

In Year 4 and Year 5, the children learn about changes through puberty (this is statutory and covered within the science curriculum and health education requirements. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from health education).

In Year 6, the children will revise their knowledge of puberty and will also learn about how a baby is conceived and how a baby is born. Parents will have the opportunity to see all teaching materials prior to the commencement of lessons. They also have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons.

For more information about our PSHE/RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, 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 ensure a safe learning environment by establishing ground rules for participation e.g. ROCK - respect, openness, confidentiality (not discussing in the playground but if the teacher is concerned by something that is raised they will notify the designated safeguarding lead) and being kind.

Pupils will be able to ask questions through anonymous question boxes. This also reduces the likelihood of inappropriate questions that are not covered by our statutory duties being raised with the whole class.

Distancing techniques are used to support teaching of relationships education-such as books, videos, dolls to allow children to ask questions whilst reducing personal embarrassment or upset as much as possible.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 The governing board**

The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

### **7.2 The Principal**

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 8).

### **7.3 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils including SEND
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

The SENCO/Inclusion lead will work closely with teachers to ensure children with SEND are able to access the learning at an appropriate level.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal.

The role of the RSE/PSHE lead is to support the teachers with developing the content and teaching materials for the classes as needed.

## **7.4 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

## **8. Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships or health education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE (how a baby is conceived and how a baby is born).

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the Principal.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

## **9. Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their continuing professional development.

The Principal may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHE/RSE lead, Curriculum lead and Principal through:

- planning scrutiny,
- learning walks,
- pupil voice etc.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE/RSE lead annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Principal.

## Appendix 1: Relationships education: content to be covered by the end of primary

| TOPIC  | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW  |
|--|---|
| <b>Families and people who care about me</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong</li> <li>• How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed</li> </ul>           |
| <b>Caring friendships</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends</li> <li>• The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties</li> <li>• That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Respectful relationships</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs</li> <li>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li> <li>• The conventions of courtesy and manners</li> <li>• The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive</li> <li>• The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults</li> </ul> |
| <b>Online relationships</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not</li> </ul>   |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
|                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them</li> <li>• How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met</li> <li>• How information and data is shared and used online</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Being safe</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact</li> <li>• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know</li> <li>• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult</li> <li>• How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard</li> <li>• How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so</li> <li>• Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources</li> </ul> |

## Appendix 2: Primary health and wellbeing: content to be covered by the end of primary

| TOPIC                           | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>General Wellbeing</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.</li> <li>● The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.</li> <li>● The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.</li> <li>● How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.</li> <li>● How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.</li> <li>● That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.</li> <li>● That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.</li> <li>● That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.</li> <li>● Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).</li> <li>● That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Wellbeing online</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.</li> <li>● Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.</li> <li>● The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.</li> <li>● How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.</li> <li>● Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.</li> <li>● The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.</li> <li>● How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.</li> <li>● That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.</li> </ul>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.</li> <li>• That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.</li> <li>• Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Physical health and fitness</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.</li> <li>• The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.</li> <li>• The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.</li> <li>• How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Healthy Eating</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).</li> <li>• Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.</li> <li>• The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.</li> <li>• The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Health protection and prevention</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.</li> <li>• About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.</li> <li>• The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.</li> <li>• About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular checkups at the dentist.</li> <li>• About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.</li> <li>• The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Personal safety</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.</li> <li>• How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.</li> </ul>  |

**Basic first aid**

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
- Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

**Developing bodies**

- About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
- The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
- The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.

### Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

| TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS   |  |       |  |
|--|--|-------|--|
| Name of child  |  | Class |  |
| Name of parent   |  | Date  |  |
| Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education |  |       |  |
|  |  |       |  |
| Any other information you would like the school to consider                      |  |       |  |
|  |  |       |  |
| Parent signature   |  |       |  |

| TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL               |  |
|---|--|
| Agreed actions from discussion with parents | <i>Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.<br/>Eg: Joe Bloggs will be taking part in all relationships and health lessons and during the sex education lessons, he will be working independently on a project in the Year 5 classroom.</i> |
|   |  |