NWC RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY 2025

Senior School
Policy statement:

Definition of RSE – from *Sex Education Forum*

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Northwood College for Girls GDST (NWC) takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible relationships and Sex education (RSE) to all its pupils as part of the school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum (PSHE) very seriously. At our school we want parents and pupils to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both age and development of pupils.

This teaching is not intended to replace advice or guidance which is ideally received at home, but to supplement and broaden knowledge and understanding.

This policy is drafted by the Deputy Head (Pastoral Development and Wellbeing) in consultation with the Head, the school nurse, Heads of Year and SEND coordinator. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this policy content. Pupils were consulted on the content of our RSE topics and their delivery in the Senior School.

Aims of policy Senior School

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. This includes emphasis on good health, the value of self - esteem in making choices and judgements, the nature of healthy and consensual relationships, and knowledge about how the body works, all within a context of moral issues and values.

RSE will outline the importance of marriage and family life and the raising of children, as well as highlighting the role of marriage and other stable relationships as building blocks for community and society.

We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle and to care and respect their bodies and we provide them with the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and beyond.

Provision in the Senior School

We subscribe to the Department of Education guidance that will be mandatory in England from September 2020: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance*.
Relationships and Sex Education for all secondary schools. Taught PSHE has also been part of the Independent Schools Standards since 2014. We aim to provide a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum that not just fulfils, but exceeds externally set standards.

The NWC curriculum is spiral, so that topics can be re-visited in later years. Although the topics below are listed specifically, we treat Relationships and Sex Education as part of the wider PSHE curriculum. We support equal opportunities in education, seeing it as enabling and encouraging all our students to build self-esteem through discussion and activities in a safe environment. We are equipping them with decision-making skills irrespective of gender roles and stereotyping.

Linked policies, Senior School

Curriculum Policy
PSHE Policy (please find the PSHE spiral curriculum, including the RSE curriculum within this policy)
Equal Opportunities Policy
Inclusion Policy
Accessibility Policy
SEND Policy
Visiting Speakers Policy
GDST Gender Policy

The main topics covered in RSE in the Senior School are:

- Establishing healthy relationships.
- Puberty, menstruation and change.
- Consent and how to communicate this to others and abstinence
- Contraception.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Understanding our bodies
- Sexting and online safety, sexual harassment
- Safer sex
- Sexual exploitation
- Sex and pornography
- Personal choices
- Illegal practices such as forced marriage, FGM, honour-based killing

As part of the PSHE programme, Relationships and Sex Education is taught by the pastoral team, the school nurse and PSHE co-ordinator mainly in form

groups, using a range of activities with materials and support provided by health professionals. We also invite in specialists in the field to deliver talks to the students.

The programme is developed and reviewed in consultation to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.
We ensure that RSE is age relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs. We ensure that staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues related to RSE including confidentiality, setting ground rules and establishing positive behaviour, handling controversial issues and responding to questions.
We ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with the school policy and guidance relating to relationships and sex education.
We ensure their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.

Terminology:
Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang and everyday terms used in social situations will be discussed; this will be part of the discussion about what is and what isn't acceptable language to be used.
Ground rules are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and staff will use strategies to enable pupils to feel comfortable to ask questions. If controversial questions are asked, the teacher will use professional judgement about how to answer them and pupils will be allowed to raise anonymous questions if preferred.
We recognise that because of the nature of the subject, sensitive and controversial issues are likely to arise. These may include, for example, abortion, emerging gender identity, sexuality and sexual abuse. These are dealt with within the framework of the aims of the school and of the Relationships and Sex Education policy as a whole. Any cause for concern will be dealt with in accordance with our pastoral systems and safeguarding arrangements.

Guest speakers:
We sometimes use outside speakers to complement our teaching of this content, who are asked to work within the framework of the school's Relationship and Sex Education policy and adhere to the policy for Visiting Speakers. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons.

Withdrawal from RSE:
The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents to review this policy. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports the whole development of the child. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education. Any parents considering withdrawing their child from RSE should contact the Head / Pastoral Deputy Head to discuss their concerns. According to *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance* paragraph 41-43 **pupils can opt into sex education from three terms before their 16th birthday.**

Junior School policy statement

Rationale
Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an important part of a child's preparation for adult life. It offers a valuable vehicle for promoting equality between individuals and groups. It involves an exploration of human and social diversity, whilst recognising, accepting and respecting differences.

Aspects of RSHE are taught as an integral part of Northwood College's Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) provision from Nursery to Year 6. In this way, girls can develop their ideas, knowledge and skills gradually and appropriately.

The Education Act 2002 sets out the statutory duties which all schools, are required to meet: 'every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:
-promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
-prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'

Statutory Requirements
From September 2020 Relationships and Health education is statutory across all state-funded primary schools in England.

Relationships Education
'The focus in primary school should be on tackling the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them.' DFE 2019

The key themes that will be taught in Relationships Education are:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Inclusivity around relationships with reference to sexuality and gender
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Health Education
'The focus in primary schools should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. This starts with pupils being taught about the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and giving pupils the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions that everyone experiences.
They will be taught the key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, including physical and emotional changes.' DFE 2019

The key themes that will be taught in Health Education are:

- Mental wellbeing including loneliness, grief and loss
- Online safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Substance abuse: Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping
- Sexual health
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body
- Personal Safety (including roads, railways, water and public spaces.

Sex Education in the Junior School
The DFE statutory guidance expects schools to deliver work on puberty. This sits under the Health Education statutory expectations as stated above. The National Curriculum for Science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction of some plants and animals. Further lessons on human reproduction are left to the discretion of the school. At Northwood College Junior School we believe the children need to understand this before they leave primary school so that:

- they have accurate information on human reproduction before they transition to senior school
- this knowledge helps to protect and safeguard them

There are specific lessons in Year 5 and 6 which teach girls about conception and human reproduction in a gentle and age appropriate way.

Junior School Curriculum

At Northwood College for Girls (Juniors), RSHE is taught by teachers in classes using the Jigsaw Scheme and resources from the PSHE Association. It provides a comprehensive program which covers all the requirements of the government guidance. Following staff and parent feedback the scheme has been adapted to suit the needs of the children at Northwood College. The content is organised age appropriately by year group. The PSHE Subject Leader is responsible for the coordination of RSHE across the school.

Relationships and Health Education requirements are taught through the 'Relationships' and 'Healthy Me' Units and are also enhanced and revisited throughout our PSHE Programme.

The specific Sex Education content (puberty and human reproduction) is taught through the 'Changing Me' Unit. This unit is taught in the second half of the Summer Term across the school.

An overview of the content is listed below:

Nursery and Reception	Bodies Respecting my body Growing up Growth and change Fun and Fears Celebration
Year 1	Life cycles – animal and human Changes in me Changes since being a baby Differences between female and male bodies (correct terminology) Linking growing and learning Coping with change
Year 2	Life cycles in nature Growing from young to old Increasing independence Differences in female and male bodies (correct terminology) Assertiveness Looking ahead
Key Stage Two	
Year 3	Differences in female and male bodies (correct terminology) How babies grow Understanding a baby's needs Family stereotypes Looking ahead
Year 4	Outside body changes Inside body changes Unique me Confidence in change Accepting change Environmental change Looking ahead
Year 5	Self and body image Puberty for girls

	Puberty for boys Conception (including IVF) Growing responsibility Coping with change Looking ahead
Year 6	Self and body image Conception to birth Puberty and feelings Physical attraction Respect and consent Positive relationships Transition – the year ahead

Partnership with Parents/Carers Junior School
Parents/Carers will be informed in writing from the school of the sex education lessons prior to them being delivered and they will be invited to come in and view the resources.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from the specific Sex Education (human reproduction) content of RSHE lessons (outside of the Science Curriculum). However, girls cannot be withdrawn from Relationships and Health Education lessons.

During our Changing Me unit, the basics of sexual intercourse is specifically taught in the **Year 5 – Conception (including IVF) and Year 6 – Conception to Birth and Puberty and Feelings (as highlighted in yellow above)**. It is taught in a sensitive, informative and diagrammatical way with pictures and animations. Parents may opt to remove their child from these sessions where this learning takes place.

Parents must provide their reasons for withdrawal in writing to the school. Mrs Halliday (Junior Head) /Mrs Crouch (Junior Deputy Head Pastoral) will speak to the parents to discuss their individual concerns and share with them lesson materials.

Dealing with sensitive issues
Both formal and informal RSHE questions arising from pupils are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the DSL if they are concerned.
The following are protocols for discussion-based lessons with pupils ('Ground Rules')

- No one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- Only correct/agreed names for body parts will be used
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
- The use of a question box may help to lessen embarrassment of asking questions
- Teachers may use their discretion in responding to questions and may say (for example):
    - The appropriate person to answer that question is the parent
    - The question can be discussed one to one after class
    - They will be covering that at a later stage in their SRE learning

Inclusion & Differentiation

Here at Northwood College Juniors we teach RSHE to all girls, whatever their ability and individual needs. RSHE forms part of our school curriculum to provide a broad and balanced education for all our children. Our teachers provide learning opportunities that are matched to the needs of individuals within their classroom. Parents are welcome to view any resources used to teach RSHE and can speak to their daughter's class teacher or Mrs Crouch (Pastoral Deputy) with any individual questions.

Monitoring & Evaluation
RSHE will be assessed by teachers throughout the unit of study. Teachers will evaluate their lessons to inform further planning. Children will be asked to reflect upon their learning as a form of self-assessment.

This policy will be updated annually or as necessary.

Reviewed and Updated :September 2025 (Deputy Heads Pastoral)