Paddington Academy
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Part of United Learning

PADDINGTON ACADEMY

RSHE Policy

2026-27

Date of last review	October 26	Review period	1 year
Date of next review	October 27	Owner	DRI
Type of policy	Statutory	Approval	LGB
SLT member in charge	DRI		

Part A – RSHE Policy

1. Introduction

At Paddington Academy, we believe that high-quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) plays a vital role in supporting young people to develop into confident, respectful and responsible adults. RSHE supports pupils' physical, emotional, social and moral development and equips them with the knowledge and skills they need to form healthy relationships, protect their wellbeing and keep themselves and others safe.

Our RSHE curriculum is values-led and promotes kindness, respect, honesty, integrity, courage and trustworthiness. We seek to equip pupils with the knowledge, understanding and character needed to build positive relationships, protect their wellbeing and contribute positively to society.

Our RSHE provision is delivered in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance. It is age-appropriate, evidence-based and carefully sequenced, ensuring pupils are prepared for situations they may encounter, rather than reacting to them after they arise.

We recognise and value the diverse cultural, religious and family backgrounds of our school community. Our approach to RSHE is respectful and inclusive, and teaching is delivered sensitively, without seeking to undermine or replace family values. We are clear that RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity, but about helping pupils make informed, safe and respectful choices.

2. Aims

Through our RSE curriculum, Paddington Academy aims to:

- Support pupils' physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- Equip pupils with the skills to build positive, respectful and healthy relationships, both online and offline
- Promote kindness, respect, integrity and responsibility
- Teach pupils how to recognise risk, harm and abusive behaviour, and how to seek help and report concerns
- Ensure that pupils understand legal rights and responsibilities related to relationships, consent and sexual behaviour
- Provide medically accurate, factual and age-appropriate information about sexual health
- Promote equality, challenge discrimination and foster respect for diversity
- Work transparently with parents so they are confident in what their child is being taught

3. Statutory Context

Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory for all secondary-age pupils. This policy has been developed in accordance with the Department for Education's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (2025), effective from September 2026. This policy is also informed by:

- DfE statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- United Learning Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy Guidance
- The Equality Act 2010
- School safeguarding legislation and guidance

The policy reflects Paddington Academy's safeguarding responsibilities and should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and SEND Policy.

Pupils cannot be withdrawn from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents have a limited right to request withdrawal from elements of sex education, as outlined in Section 7 of this policy.

4. Sex Education

Sex Education forms part of the statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum for secondary pupils. This element includes teaching about:

- Human reproduction;
- Sexual health and fertility;
- Consent in sexual relationships;
- Sexually transmitted infections and contraception;
- Pregnancy and choices relating to pregnancy;
- sexual activity and sexual decision-making;
- sexual health services;
- intimate and sexual relationships

Some elements of Sex Education are taught through the Science curriculum, which parents cannot withdraw their child from, for example human reproduction and fertility.

Parents have a limited right to request withdrawal from those elements of Sex Education that are taught outside the Science curriculum, up until three terms before their child turns 16, as outlined in Section 7 of this policy.

5. Relationships Education

Relationships Education is a statutory component of the Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum and is compulsory for all pupils. There is no right for parents to withdraw their child from Relationships Education.

This element of the curriculum focuses on developing pupils' understanding of:

- Healthy, respectful and positive relationships
- Friendship and peer relationships
- Family relationships and the role of care and support

- Respect, kindness, honesty and integrity
- Boundaries, consent and personal safety
- Diversity and inclusion, including respect for different family structures, backgrounds, identities and beliefs
- Online behaviour, digital safety and respectful communication
- Recognising unhealthy, controlling or abusive behaviour and how to seek help

Relationships Education supports pupils to form safe, respectful and healthy relationships throughout their lives. It does not include the teaching of sexual acts and is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Because Relationships Education is statutory, parents cannot withdraw their child from this aspect of the curriculum.

6. Parental, Staff and Pupil Consultation

This policy has been developed and reviewed through consultation with parents, staff and pupils. We believe that meaningful consultation strengthens our curriculum and ensures it is responsive to the needs of our community.

- parents are consulted during policy reviews;
- pupils provide feedback on curriculum content;
- staff contribute to policy and curriculum development;
- consultation outcomes inform future revisions.

During parent consultations, parents are encouraged to:

- Attend RSHE consultation meetings
- View sample resources used in RSHE lessons / content
- Submit questions or concerns for discussion

Feedback from these consultations is considered carefully and used to inform curriculum planning and policy review.

7. Curriculum Organisation and Delivery

RSE at Paddington Academy is delivered through a planned and structured programme as part of PSHE, alongside curriculum links to Science and other relevant subjects. Learning is carefully sequenced so that knowledge and skills develop progressively across Key Stages.

RSE lessons:

- Are taught by trained, Paddington Academy members of staff
- Are age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate
- Use correct vocabulary and medically accurate information
- Encourage discussion within clear and safe boundaries

- Respect pupils' backgrounds while meeting statutory requirements

Details of the curriculum content by year group are provided in the appendix of this policy. Parents may request to view curriculum overviews, lesson resources and supporting materials by contacting the school. Requests will be managed by the RSHE Lead.

8. Teaching and Learning Approach

RSHE is taught in a safe, supportive and respectful environment. Staff establish clear ground rules, use distancing techniques (such as case studies or third-person scenarios), and signpost pupils to support where appropriate. Teachers also use age-appropriate discussion routines and hypothetical scenarios to allow pupils to engage with sensitive topics safely and respectfully.

Staff do not offer personal advice on sexual behaviour. Where sensitive questions arise, teachers respond in line with safeguarding procedures and may refer pupils to appropriate support services. All staff delivering RSHE receive training and guidance to ensure confidence, accuracy and consistency.

9. Working with Parents and the Right to Withdraw

We recognise that parents and carers are their child's first educators and play a vital role in supporting their child's understanding of relationships.

Parents have the right to request withdrawal from some or all elements of sex education (except the content that is delivered through the science curriculum), up until three terms before their child turns 16. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Any request to withdraw must be made in writing to the Principal. Following a request for withdrawal, the Principal will meet with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil to discuss the request to:

- Clarify which content the request relates to
- Explain the purpose and benefits of the education
- Discuss potential implications of withdrawal

Except in exceptional circumstances, requests will be respected up to the statutory point. If a pupil wishes to receive sex education after this point, the school will make appropriate arrangements. Pupils who are withdrawn will receive appropriate, purposeful alternative education during those lessons.

10. Safeguarding

RSE is a key part of Paddington Academy's safeguarding provision. Lessons may prompt disclosures or raise concerns, and staff are trained to respond appropriately and report concerns. All safeguarding concerns arising from RSE are managed in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Pupils are taught that they can seek help and that abuse is never their fault.

11. Inclusivity and SEND

All pupils, including those with SEND, are entitled to access RSHE. Content will be adapted through the use of visual supports, simplified but accurate language, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, appropriate scaffolding and structured discussion to ensure all pupils can access learning.

The Academy recognises that pupils with SEND can be more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and unhealthy relationships. High-quality RSHE therefore forms an important part of safeguarding and personal development for these pupils.

RSHE planning takes account of pupils' individual needs and vulnerabilities, recognising that high-quality RSE is a protective factor for many learners.

12. Equality and Respect

Our RSE curriculum complies with the Equality Act 2010 and promotes respect for all. Teaching challenges prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination, including sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of harmful behaviour.

We ensure that pupils understand their rights and responsibilities and the importance of respect for others, even where beliefs or values differ.

13. Faith and Religious Backgrounds

Teaching will be sensitive to the religious and cultural backgrounds of pupils and families. The Academy will deliver the statutory curriculum in a balanced and respectful way, while ensuring that all pupils receive accurate information and are able to understand their rights, responsibilities and how to keep themselves safe.

14. Responding to Questions

Pupils may occasionally ask questions which fall outside the planned curriculum or which are not appropriate for discussion in class. Staff will respond sensitively and professionally, ensuring accurate information is provided where appropriate, whilst recognising safeguarding responsibilities and the role of parents. Staff will never provide personal advice regarding sexual behaviour.

15. Complaints

Any concerns or complaints about Relationships and Sex Education should be raised in line with the school's Complaints Policy, available on the school website.

16. Governance, Monitoring and Review

This policy is approved by the Local Governing Body and reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

The Senior Leader with responsibility for RSE oversees:

- Curriculum quality and coverage
- Staff training
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Policy review and consultation

17. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy

18. RSHE Curriculum Overview

The table below provides an overview of the Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum delivered at Paddington Academy. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all content taught through PSHE, Science or Personal Development, but instead highlights the key areas of learning related to relationships, sex and health education across each key stage.

RSHE is delivered through a combination of timetabled PSHE lessons, Science lessons, dedicated RSHE and Personal Development Days, assemblies, external speakers and wider pastoral provision. This ensures that important themes are revisited regularly and developed in an age-appropriate way as students progress through the school.

We work closely with a range of external agencies and specialist providers to complement our curriculum, particularly in areas such as consent, healthy relationships, sexual harassment, online safety and safeguarding. Themes including consent, equality, misogyny, diversity, inclusion and the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism are woven throughout the curriculum and are explored in different contexts as students mature. This approach helps students to understand how these issues are often interconnected and equips them with the knowledge, skills and judgement needed to build healthy relationships, keep themselves safe and contribute positively to society.

Key Stage	Topics covered in Science Lessons	Topics covered in PSHE	Topics covered in RSE Stop Day
KS3 Year 7 Year 8 Year 9	**In Key Stage 3 students learn:** ▪ The anatomy and physiology of the male and female reproductive systems. ▪ The role of sperm and egg cells in fertilisation and human reproduction. ▪ How fertilisation, conception and pregnancy occur. ▪ The menstrual cycle and reproductive health. ▪ The stages of pregnancy, including foetal development and gestation. ▪ The scientific understanding of human growth and reproduction.	**In Key Stage 3, students learn about:** **Relationships and Respect** • The importance of kindness, empathy, respect and positive communication in relationships. • How to build, manage and maintain healthy friendships. • How to resolve conflict respectfully and manage peer pressure. • How to recognise unhealthy relationships and access support when needed. **Online Relationships and Safety** • How to build and maintain safe relationships online. • How to use social media responsibly and safely. • The risks associated with online communication and digital behaviour. • How media and social media can influence attitudes, relationships and wellbeing. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** • The importance of treating all people with dignity and respect. • Understanding LGBT+ identities and experiences. • The impact of homophobic, transphobic and discriminatory language. • The history of LGBT+ rights in the UK and the importance of equality and inclusion. **Health and Wellbeing** • How to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.	**As part of a dedicated Relationships and Sex Education Day, students explore a range of topics designed to support their understanding of healthy relationships, personal safety and sexual health. These include:** • Human sexual reproduction, including reproductive anatomy and the role of sexual intercourse in conception. • Sexual health, including different methods of contraception and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). • The principles of consent and the importance of recognising and challenging sexual harassment. • The role of self-esteem, confidence and respect in building healthy relationships. • Staying safe online, including managing risks within digital relationships and social media. • The diversity of family structures and the important role that families and carers play in supporting young people. • Gender roles, stereotypes and the importance of equality and mutual respect.

		• Strategies for managing friendships, relationships and personal challenges. • The physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence. **Living in the Wider World** • How to become responsible, respectful and active citizens. • The importance of equality, community participation and social responsibility. • How to make informed decisions about their future education, careers and personal development.	

KS4 Year 10 Year 11	**In Key Stage 4, students build on their understanding of human reproduction and reproductive health, learning about:** • The hormonal regulation of the menstrual cycle and its role in reproduction. • Fertility, conception and factors that can affect reproductive health. • A range of contraceptive methods, including hormonal and barrier methods, and their effectiveness in preventing pregnancy. • Assisted reproductive technologies, including in vitro fertilisation (IVF) and other fertility treatments. • Embryo screening and the use of genetic technologies in healthcare. • The ethical, social and scientific considerations associated with reproductive technologies and genetic screening. • The application of scientific knowledge to support informed decision-making about reproductive and sexual health.	**In Key Stage 4, students learn about:** **Relationships and Respect** • Healthy relationships, consent, personal boundaries and mutual respect. • Recognising and challenging harassment, misogyny, discrimination and abusive behaviour. • The impact of relationships on wellbeing and future life choices. **Online Relationships and Safety** • Managing online relationships safely and responsibly. • The influence of social media, technology and online content on behaviour and wellbeing. • Understanding and responding to online risks, exploitation and harmful influences. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** • Promoting equality, inclusion and respect for all. • Understanding LGBT+ identities and experiences. • Challenging prejudice, stereotypes and discriminatory language. **Health and Wellbeing** • Maintaining positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. • Managing stress, risk-taking behaviours and personal challenges. • Knowing how and when to access support. **Living in the Wider World** • Developing as responsible, respectful and active citizens.	

		• Understanding current social issues and their impact on individuals and communities. • Making informed decisions about future education, employment and relationships.	

KS5 Year 12 Year 13		**In Key Stage 5, students learn about:** **Relationships and Respect** • Healthy adult relationships, consent, equality and mutual respect. • Challenging misogyny, discrimination and harmful behaviours. • The role of relationships in shaping identity, wellbeing and future aspirations. **Online Relationships and Safety** • The impact of social media, technology and online influences on relationships and wellbeing. • Evaluating online information critically and engaging responsibly in digital spaces. • Managing online risks and protecting personal safety. **Health and Wellbeing** • Maintaining positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. • Managing stress, resilience and the challenges associated with transitioning to adulthood. • Knowing how and when to seek support. **Living in the Wider World** • Promoting equality, respect and active citizenship. • Understanding how personal, social and financial decisions affect future opportunities. • Preparing for higher education, employment and adult life.	**As part of a dedicated Sixth Form Personal Development Programme, students explore a range of topics designed to support healthy relationships, personal wellbeing, digital safety and responsible citizenship.** **These include:** • The characteristics of healthy adult relationships, including trust, communication, respect and consent. • Recognising unhealthy relationships, including controlling and coercive behaviour, sexual harassment and abuse. • How to support themselves and others when facing relationship difficulties, discrimination or safeguarding concerns. • Respect for diversity, including LGBT+ identities, and the importance of challenging prejudice and discrimination. • Staying safe online, including understanding the long-term impact of online behaviour and managing risks associated with social media and digital communication. • The influence of online content, social media and extremist ideologies, including how misinformation, misogyny and radicalisation can affect individuals and communities. • British values, equality, inclusion and the importance of respectful participation in a diverse society. • Building self-esteem, resilience and the skills needed to make safe,

		informed and responsible decisions as young adults. This programme supports students in developing the knowledge, confidence and judgement needed to build healthy relationships, protect their wellbeing and successfully navigate adult life.