

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

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Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
1		Existing
2	March 2023	No updates, part of annual review
3	March 2025	No updates, part of annual review
4	March 2026	Changes have been made to the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum content section (P13-16)

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

1. Policy aims and objectives

The aims of relationship and sex education (RSE) at Mulberry are to:

- Foster healthy, respectful and safe relationships across the whole school community, both offline and online. The school places great value on pupils' given information to make informed decisions and can therefore keep themselves safe.
- The school will comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and promote respect for all protected characteristics.
- The school will equip pupils with accurate, age appropriate information to enable informed decisions that promote well being and safeguarding.
- To build pupil's self-esteem, resilience and emotional literacy.
- To dispel myths and misinformation around relationships, identity and online content.
- To provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.
- To promote pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Our approach to RSE will be conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships.
- Respect, understanding and empathy for people of different backgrounds, cultures, sexual orientations and gender identity.
- The development of relationships built on mutual consent, communication and respect.
- The right to feel safe and protected from abuse, coercion and exploitation.
- To understand the laws around relationships, consent and safeguarding.

We also believe that pupils have an entitlement to:

- Age and circumstance appropriate, inclusive RSE.
- Clear safeguarding pathways and access to trusted adults and support services.
- RSE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The academy's approach to RSE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias. We shall endeavour to have an approach that is educational, rather than one based on propaganda.

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

2. Statutory curriculum from the Department for Education

National curriculum science from the Department for Education

- At key stage 3 and 4 the national curriculum for science includes teaching about reproduction in humans; for example, the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, gametes, fertilization, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS.
- Subject content (see appendices for full list of content)
- There continues to be no right to withdraw from national curriculum science.

Health Education (Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing) from the Department for Education

- The aim is to enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions. The lessons will help pupils to understand that there are normal variations in emotions and physical complaints and to help pupils to recognise the early stages of health and wellbeing issues.
- Pupils will be taught self-care steps which they can use to protect and support their own physical and mental health and wellbeing; which includes strategies for building resilience

such as physical activity, hobbies, good nutrition, sleep and outward facing activities. Pupils will also be taught how to judge when someone they know needs support and where they can go to seek help.

- Pupils will learn the key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing in Health Education; this should build on the lessons started at primary school. Pupils will be taught both the physical and emotional changes and the impact this has on their wider health and well-being.
- Subject content (see appendices for full list of content).
- There is no right to withdraw from Health Education.

Relationships and Sex Education from the Department for Education

- RSE within secondary school should provide a clear progression from the lessons taught in primary school.
- The focus in secondary school should be to provide young people the information to identify and develop healthy relationships (family, friendships, colleagues, successful marriage or other type of committed relationship), not just intimate relationships. It will also ensure that pupils will cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). Pupils will learn about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships; both offline and online, how to identify this in relationships, recognise the impact this can have on mental wellbeing and understand how such situations can be managed. Pupils should also be taught about the link between self-respect and mental well-being, the facts and law about sex, consent, grooming and online safety, sexuality, gender identity, sexual health and the choices permitted by the law around pregnancy in an age appropriate and inclusive way.
- In all schools, teaching should reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.
- Subject content (see appendices for full list of content).
- There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education.

Relationships and Sex Education (Secondary)

- By the end of secondary school: Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary: [link to DFe policy https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6970e7e67e827090d02d42e0/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education_RSE_and_health_education_for_intro_1_September_2026 .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6970e7e67e827090d02d42e0/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education_RSE_and_health_education_for_intro_1_September_2026.pdf)

Families	<p>Families Curriculum content:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That there are different types of committed, stable relationships. 2. How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children. 3. Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony. 4. That ‘common-law marriage’ is a myth and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children. 5. That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal. 6. How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships. 7. The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child’s life for brain development. 8. How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.
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<p>Respectful relationships</p>	<p>Respectful relationships Curriculum content:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. 2. How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal. 3. The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others. 4. What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs. 5. The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict. 6. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. 7. Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration. 8. The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok. 9. How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice. 10. How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others. 11. How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others. 12. Pupils should have an opportunity to discuss how some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called "involuntary celibates" (incels) or online influencers.
<p>Online safety and awareness</p>	<p>Online safety and awareness Curriculum content:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. 2. Online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online. Pupils should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues. 3. The characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and / or may post things which aren't real / have been created with AI. That social media users may say things in more extreme

	<p>ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online.</p> <p>4. Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images.</p> <p>5. That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Pupils should know how to seek support and should understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared. Pupils should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime.</p> <p>6. What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online.</p> <p>7. About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them.</p> <p>8. That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamorise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong.</p> <p>9. That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice.</p> <p>10. How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns.</p> <p>11. That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately. Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it.</p> <p>12. How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.</p> <p>13. That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (e.g. to enable targeted advertising).</p> <p>14. That criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion.</p> <p>15. That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. It is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk.</p>
Being safe	<p>Being safe Curriculum content:</p> <p>1. How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent.</p>

	<p>2. That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others.</p> <p>3. How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.</p> <p>4. How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. Pupils should learn ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. Pupils should understand that there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. Pupils might reflect on the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions</p> <p>5. What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it.</p> <p>6. That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting.</p> <p>7. The concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault.</p> <p>8. The concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language.</p> <p>9. The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.</p> <p>10. That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.</p> <p>11. The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation.</p> <p>12. The concepts and laws relating to forced marriage.</p> <p>13. The physical and emotional damage which can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty, where to find support, and the law around these areas. This should include that it is a criminal offence for anyone to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, in the UK or abroad, or to fail to protect a person under 16 for whom they are responsible.</p> <p>14. That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury. That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death.</p> <p>15. That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful.</p> <p>16. How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse, and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault.</p>
<p>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</p>	<p>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health Curriculum content:</p> <p>1. That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.</p> <p>2. The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex.</p> <p>3. Sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people</p>

	<p>might take into account prior to sexual activity, e.g. the law, faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent.</p> <p>4. 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.</p> <p>5. That some sexual behaviours can be harmful.</p> <p>6. The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decisionmaking.</p> <p>7. That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.</p> <p>8. How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use). The use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma</p> <p>9. The prevalence of STIs, the short and long term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.</p> <p>10. How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.</p> <p>11. How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms.</p> <p>12. How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.</p>
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3. Policy review

This policy has been developed by the Assistant Head in close consultation with the Borough of Tower Hamlets, staff, pupils, parents, Local Advisory Body and relevant outside agencies.

4. Definition

Relationships and Sex Education is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

Relationships and Sex Education involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

Relationships and Sex Education is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

4.1 Why is Relationships and Sex Education in schools important?

High quality Relationships and Sex Education helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:

- Children and young people have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships. Older pupils frequently say that sex and relationships education was 'too little, too late and too biological'. Ofsted reinforced this in their 2013 Not Yet Good Enough report.
- RSE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding obligations. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables pupils to learn about safety and risk in relationships.

5. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the health and relationships education curriculum (HRSE). Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in Religious education (RE).

The academy's approach to RSE consists of:

- 1.The taught National Curriculum Science Programme of Study.
- 2.RSE within each Key Stage delivered within a planned HRSE programme
- 3.Pastoral support for students who experience difficulties.
- 4.Provision of appropriate information through school nurse drop-in sessions where appropriate.
5. Drop Days - students may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The Governors

The Governors will approve the Relationships and Sex Education policy, and hold the Executive Head teacher to account for its implementation.

6.2 The Executive Head teacher

The Executive Head teacher is responsible for ensuring that Relationships and Sex Education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of Relationships and Sex Education (see section 7).

6.3 Senior leadership (SLT)

SLT will endeavour to support the provision and development of Relationships and Sex Education in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

6.4 Assistant Head teacher

The Assistant Head will maintain an overview of Relationships and Sex Education provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, developing the provision to meet student's needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.

6.5 Staff

All teachers are involved in the school's Relationships and Sex Education provision. Some teach Relationships and Sex Education through the HRSE programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues. Teachers will be consulted about the academy's approach to Relationships and Sex Education and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some Relationships and Sex Education lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students. They will have access to information about the Relationships and Sex Education programme and supported in their pastoral role.

6.6 Pupils

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

A whole school approach will be adapted to Relationships and Sex Education that actively involves the whole academy community.

All students have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate Relationships and Sex Education and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their Relationships and Sex Education needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

6.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the academy's Relationships and Sex Education provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish (see section 7). The academy will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. This will periodically include information/education workshops for parents/carers. The academy's approach to Relationships and Sex Education will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children.

6.8 The school nurse

The school nurse can play a key role in supporting the teacher in Relationships and Sex Education both in terms of advice, input into lessons, provision of pastoral support for students and resources. The school will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the school nurse.

6.9 Outside agencies and speakers

Outside agencies may be involved in inputting to Relationships and Sex Education lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. The academy will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. The school will also promote relevant helping agencies that students can access.

7. The right to withdraw

Although the guidance states that Sex Education is statutory, it also states that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. They can be withdrawn by the parent up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. Sex Education would become statutory once again. If the withdrawn pupil wishes to receive sex education lessons after this point, they can opt themselves back in.

If parents want to withdraw their child they need to meet in person with the Executive Head teacher and discuss their reasons and concerns. Letters to withdraw pupils, instead of a meeting, will not be accepted. Pupils cannot be withdrawn from national curriculum science, Relationships Education or Health Education. Pupils can however be withdrawn from Sex Education, following discussions with the Executive Head teacher and an agreement in writing.

The school will document this process.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment

The subjects will be monitored and evaluated by a member of SLT.

9. Equality

The school will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010: schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics).

Our Relationships and Sex Education programme aims to create a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment.

The delivery of the content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND.

The school takes positive action to build a culture where everyday sexism, misogyny and homophobia etc are not tolerated and any occurrences identified and tackled. The schools Relationships and Sex Education curriculum supports the wider school values of tolerance and respect.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender (LGBT). The school should ensure that all of the teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. Lessons on LGBT will be fully integrated into the programme of study, rather than as a stand-alone unit or lesson.

Inclusion

'Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in sex and relationships education. Sex and relationship education should help all students understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'.

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The academy strongly believes that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the academy's approach to RSE will take account of:

The needs of boys as well as girls. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism, misogyny, homophobia and any form of bullying.

Resources

For an overview of the recommended RSE Borough resources, please see the appendices. This is not an exhaustive resource list however; schools will need to include additional Health Education resources and other RSE lessons to create a comprehensive spiral curriculum for the duration of each academic year. The government have included a range of recommended websites and resources in the appendices of the latest RSE guidance document.

LBTH recommend that schools source additional *Quality Mark resources* from the PSHE Association website, via 'resource search'.

Additional subject specific resources and materials will be rolled-out by the government in due course, these are often uploaded onto the PSHE Association website and members are kept informed by regular e-newsletter updates.

The school will also use resources adapted from a number of recognized sources e.g. MIND / NSPCC

PSHE Association

LBTH recommend that schools join the PSHE Association to gain access to Quality Mark resources, subject support and curriculum updates. Annual Individual memberships cost £45, whilst annual whole school memberships cost £120.

Appendices:

LBTH Secondary RSE and Health Education recommended resources, for the new RSE curriculum:

- -KS3 and KS4 Medway & PSHE Association Resources- [Free for members](#)
- -KS3: NSPCC & PSHE Association- Making sense of relationships- [Free resource](#)
- -KS3 and KS4: PSHE Association Emotional Health & Mental Wellbeing – [Free resource](#)¹
- -KS4 DiRSEspect Nobody Campaign Resources: Healthy Relationships lessons- [Free resource](#)
- Jigsaw 11-16 (Secondary PSHE), the mindful approach to PSHE (Quality Mark Pending) from the PSHE Association-[Prices available on their website](#)
- KS3 and KS4 Rise Above resources for Schools-Public Health England. [The free lessons include:](#)
 - Social media
 - Sleep
 - Dealing with change
 - Transition to secondary school
 - Puberty
 - Bullying and cyberbullying
 - Smoking
 - Online stress and FOMO
 - Alcohol
 - Exam stress
 - Body image in a digital world
 - Forming positive relationships

¹ **Please note:** The PSHE Association's Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing Lessons are free, however members of the PSHE Association gain access to the lessons in PowerPoint format.

Secondary health and wellbeing curriculum content

Schools should continue to develop knowledge of topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

Mental wellbeing

Curriculum content:

1. How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
2. The benefits and importance of physical activity, sleep, time outdoors, community participation and volunteering or acts of kindness for mental wellbeing and happiness.
3. That happiness is linked to being connected to others. Pupils should be supported to understand what makes them feel happy and what makes them feel unhappy, while recognising that loneliness can be for most people an inevitable part of life at times and is not something of which to be ashamed.
4. That worrying and feeling down are normal, can affect everyone at different times and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition, and that managing those feelings can be helped by seeing them as normal.
5. Characteristics of common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression), including carefully-presented factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental health conditions. This should not be discussed in a way that encourages normal feelings to be labelled as mental health conditions.
6. How to critically evaluate which activities will contribute to their overall wellbeing.
7. Understanding how to overcome anxiety or other barriers to participating in fun, enjoyable or rewarding activities – that it's possible to overcome those barriers using coping strategies, and that finding the courage to participate in activities which initially feel challenging may decrease anxiety over time rather than increasing it.
8. That gambling can lead to serious mental health harms, including anxiety, depression, and suicide, and that some gambling products are more likely to cause these harms than others.
9. That the co-occurrence of alcohol/drug use and poor mental health is common and that the relationship is bi-directional: mental health problems can increase the risk of alcohol/drug use, and alcohol/drug use can trigger mental health problems or exacerbate existing ones. That stopping smoking can improve people's mental health and decrease anxiety.

Wellbeing online

Curriculum content:

1. About 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.
2. 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; the impact that an over-reliance on online relationships, including relationships formed through social media, can have.
3. 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.
4. The risks related to online gambling and gambling-like content within gaming, including the accumulation of debt.
5. How advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online, understanding the prevalence of misinformation and disinformation online, including conspiracy theories.
6. The risks of illegal behaviours online, including drug and knife supply or the sale or purchasing of illicit drugs online.
7. The serious risks of viewing online content that promotes self-harm, suicide or violence, including how to safely report this material and how to access support after viewing it.

Physical health and fitness

Curriculum content:

1. The characteristics of a healthy lifestyle, including physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill-health, including cardiovascular ill-health.
2. Factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious health conditions.
3. That physical activity can promote wellbeing and combat stress.
4. The science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating

Curriculum content:

1. How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay, unhealthy weight gain, and cardiovascular disease.
2. The risks of unhealthy weight gain, including increased risks of cancer, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
3. The impacts of alcohol on diet and unhealthy weight gain.

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

Curriculum content:

1. The facts about which drugs are illegal, the risks of taking illegal drugs, including the increased risk of potent synthetic drugs being added to illegal drugs, the risks of illicit vapes containing drugs, illicit drugs and counterfeit medicines, and the potential health harms, including the link to poor mental health.
2. The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
3. The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption. What constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood, and the legal age of sale for alcohol in England. Understanding how to increase personal safety while drinking alcohol, including how to decrease the risks of having a drink spiked or of poisoning from potentially fatal substances such as methanol.
4. The physical and psychological consequences of problem-use of alcohol, including alcohol dependency.
5. The dangers of the misuse of prescribed and over-the-counter medicines.
6. The facts about the multiple serious harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer and cardiovascular disease), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
7. The facts about vaping, including the harms posed to young people, and the role that vapes can play in helping adult smokers to quit.

Health protection and prevention, and understanding the healthcare system

Curriculum content:

1. Personal hygiene, germs and how they are spread, including bacteria and viruses, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
2. Dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and cleaning between teeth, reducing consumption of sugar-containing food and drinks, and regular check-ups at the dentist.
3. How and when to self-care for minor ailments, and the role of pharmacists as knowledgeable healthcare professionals.
4. The importance of taking responsibility for their own health, and the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
5. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination, immunisation and antimicrobial resistance. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.
6. The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, the importance of screen-free time before bed and removing phones from the bedroom, and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
7. The importance of healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy, including the importance of pre-conception health, including taking folic acid. The importance of pelvic floor health. Information on miscarriage and pregnancy loss, and how to access care and support.
8. How to navigate their local healthcare system: what a GP is; when to use A&E / minor injuries; accessing sexual health and family planning clinics; the role of local pharmacies; and how to seek help via local third sector partners which may have specialist services.
9. The concept of Gillick competence. That the legal age of medical consent is 16. That before this, a child's parents will have responsibility for consenting to medical treatment on their behalf unless they are Gillick competent to take this decision for themselves. Pupils should understand the circumstances in which someone over 16 may not be deemed to have capacity to make decisions about medical treatment.

Personal safety

Curriculum content:

1. How to identify risk and manage personal safety in increasingly independent situations, including around roads, railways – including level crossings - and water (including the water safety code), and in unfamiliar social or work settings (for example the first time a young person goes on holiday without their parents).
2. How to recognise and manage peer influence in relation to risk-taking behaviour and personal safety, including peer influence online and on social media.
3. How to develop key social and emotional skills that will increase pupils' safety from involvement in conflict and violence. These include skills to support self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making, as well as skills to recognise and manage peer pressure.
4. Understanding which trusted adults they can talk to if pupils are worried about violence and/or knife crime.
5. The law as it relates to knives and violence. Content and examples should relate to the local context and avoid using fear as an educational tool. Children should be taught that carrying weapons is uncommon, and should not be scared into the perception that many young people are carrying knives (which can lead to the misconception that they need to carry a knife too).
6. The risks and signs that they may be at risk of grooming or exploitation, and how to seek help where there is a concern.

Basic first aid

Curriculum content:

1. Basic treatment for common injuries and ailments.
2. Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.¹¹
3. The purpose of defibrillators, when one might be needed and who can use them.

Developing bodies

Curriculum content:

1. The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.
2. The facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body, including brain development.
3. About menstrual and gynaecological health, including: what is an average period; period problems such as premenstrual syndrome; heavy menstrual bleeding; endometriosis; and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). When to seek help from healthcare professionals.
4. The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and menopause, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.

¹¹ Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation is usually best taught after 12 years old.

National curriculum science from the Department for Education:

Key Stage 3 (National Curriculum 2015 from the Department for Education)
Science
Statutory
<p><u>Reproduction:</u> 'Reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilization, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta'.</p> <p><u>Inheritance, chromosomes, DNA and Genes</u> 'Heredity as the process by which genetic information is transmitted from one generation to the next'</p>

Key Stage 4 (National Curriculum 2015 from the Department for Education)
Science
Statutory
<p><u>Health, disease and the development of medicines</u> 'Communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDS) '</p> <p><u>Coordination and Control</u> 'Principles of hormonal coordination and control in humans' 'Hormones in human reproduction, hormonal and non-hormonal methods of contraception'</p> <p><u>Evolution, inheritance and variation</u> 'Sex determination in humans' 'Genetic variation in populations of a species' 'The process of natural selection leading to evolution' 'The evidence for evolution'</p>