Park Academy West London
an Aspirations Academy

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

2026-2027

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1. Purpose and principles

At Park Academy West London, relationships and sex education (RSE) helps students develop healthy, respectful relationships, make informed choices and recognise when they or others need help. It reflects our values of perseverance, aspiration, respect and kindness, and is taught within Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic education (PSHCE).

This policy covers Years 7–13. It is based on the Department for Education's July 2025 statutory guidance, applicable from 1 September 2026, the 2019 RSHE Regulations and the Equality Act 2010. It should be read alongside the academy's safeguarding, Behaviour for Learning, anti-bullying, SEND and online safety policies.

Relationships education teaches friendship, families, respect, boundaries, consent, equality and recognising and reporting abuse, including online. It can address sexual violence to keep students safe without describing sexual activity. Sex education teaches intimate sexual relationships, sexual activity, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, fertility and pregnancy. Health education includes puberty, menstrual health, physical and mental wellbeing and personal safety. These areas may be taught together, but sex education content will be identified for parents in advance.

2. Curriculum and delivery

The 2026–2027 curriculum map sets out the half-termly sequence. Appendix 1 reproduces the published Years 7–11 overview; Appendix 2 summarises the sixth form programme. Teaching builds knowledge and skills over time, revisits key ideas and equips students to manage situations before harm occurs. The PSHCE Lead will check detailed plans against all statutory outcomes, coordinate with science and other subjects, and address any gaps rather than relying on topic titles alone.

RSE and health education are taught by academy staff through timetabled PSHCE lessons, supported where appropriate by other subjects, assemblies and specialist visitors. Teachers use clear explanations, discussion, scenarios and opportunities to practise communication, decision-making and seeking help. Content and resources must be accurate, age and stage appropriate, accessible and consistent with this policy.

The programme covers positive relationships and consent; families and commitments; sexual health; abuse and exploitation; online safety, pornography, image sharing and deepfakes; misogyny and harmful influences; and physical and mental health. Sixth form teaching develops these themes for increasing independence and adult life. It does not encourage early sexual activity or present harmful behaviour as normal.

3. Responsibilities

The Trust Board, or governing body acting under delegated authority, approves the policy and oversees provision. The Principal ensures implementation, staff training and appropriate decisions on withdrawal. The PSHCE Lead plans the sequence, checks resources and statutory coverage, supports teachers and evaluates learning. Teachers deliver and assess the curriculum and follow safeguarding procedures. The SENDCo supports adaptations; the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) advises on vulnerability, disclosures and local risks.

Any external provider must be approved by the Principal or PSHCE Lead. Credentials, lesson plans and all materials will be checked in advance; provider details and resources will be shared with parents. Visitors must follow academy safeguarding procedures, and academy staff retain responsibility for teaching and supervision.

4. Inclusion and equality

All students are entitled to accessible, respectful teaching. Staff will adapt vocabulary, resources, pacing and teaching methods for SEND, literacy and language needs, working with the SENDCo and pastoral staff. Additional rehearsal, visual support or individual teaching may be used. Students' maturity, lived experiences and vulnerability to abuse will inform planning.

Teaching respects different families, cultures, religions and beliefs and meets the academy's equality duties. Healthy same-sex relationships and relevant sexual health information are integrated into the programme. Students learn the facts and law about biological sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment, including protection from discrimination. Contested views will not be presented as established fact; teaching will not enforce stereotypes, teach that everyone has a gender identity as fact, or suggest that social transition is a simple solution to distress. Relevant external resources will be discussed with parents in advance.

5. Safe teaching and safeguarding

Teachers establish clear ground rules: respectful language, no personal questions or pressure to disclose experiences, and a clear explanation of confidentiality. Anonymous questions and fictional scenarios allow students to explore sensitive issues safely. Students may decline to share personal information; this is distinct from withdrawal from lessons.

Staff answer questions factually and sensitively, within the planned curriculum and students' age and stage. Questions beyond planned content, or relating to sex education from which a student is withdrawn, will be handled privately with the PSHCE Lead or DSL as needed. Staff may encourage discussion with parents or a trusted adult and signpost reliable support, without recreating withdrawn lessons. Safeguarding needs must still be addressed.

Concerns or disclosures must be acted on immediately in line with the safeguarding policy and current Keeping Children Safe in Education, including referral to the DSL or deputy and any applicable mandatory reporting duties. Staff must never promise secrecy. Students will be taught how to seek help inside and outside school. Abuse is never the victim's fault.

Sexual harassment, sexual violence, homophobia and misogyny will be challenged. Teaching promotes kindness, care and respect beyond consent, avoids blaming victims or stigmatising boys, and does not show explicit pornography or direct students to harmful content.

6. Parents and teaching materials

Parents and carers will be consulted when this policy is reviewed, alongside students, staff and governors. The policy and curriculum overview will be published on the academy website. Parents will be informed in advance of any significant changes to the published programme.

7. Withdrawal from sex education

Parents may request withdrawal from some or all sex education within RSE by writing to the Principal through the academy office. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education, health education or science curriculum content, including puberty and reproduction.

The Principal will discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate, the student, explain the relevant content, benefits and possible effects of withdrawal, and record the discussion and decision. Requests will normally be granted; refusal is reserved for exceptional circumstances, such as safeguarding concerns or a student's particular vulnerability, in line with statutory guidance.

From three terms before their sixteenth birthday, students may choose to opt back into sex education despite a parental request for withdrawal. The academy will make students aware of this option and arrange teaching where they choose to receive it.

Withdrawn students will receive appropriate, purposeful supervised education. Teachers will be informed of the precise content affected so that students continue to receive relationships and health education and other required teaching.

8. Assessment monitoring and review

Students are assessed each half-term. Assessment checks knowledge, understanding and the application of skills to scenarios; it does not judge personal beliefs or require disclosure of private experiences. Teachers provide feedback, correct misconceptions and use the findings to identify support, revisit content and plan next steps.

The PSHCE Lead evaluates provision through assessment outcomes, curriculum and resource reviews, work scrutiny, lesson visits and student and parent feedback. Safeguarding and pastoral information inform priorities without exposing individual students' circumstances. Findings and necessary improvements are reported to senior leaders and the governing body responsible for oversight.

This draft has been prepared using the academy's 2026–2027 curriculum map and overview, the DfE statutory guidance and the PSHE Association's 2025 policy-writing guidance. It will be finalised following consultation and approval by the Trust Board or its delegated governing body. Consultation and approval dates will be recorded on the cover.

The Principal and PSHCE Lead will review the policy annually, next in September 2027, and sooner if guidance, student needs or the curriculum change. Review will include consultation with parents and consideration of student and staff views.

Reference documents

Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, July 2025, for introduction on 1 September 2026.

PSHE Association: Writing and updating your school's Relationships Education / Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy, 2025.

Park Academy West London: PSHE Map 2026–2027; PSHE Long-term Overview KS3–4 2026–2027; Behaviour for Learning Policy 2026–2027.

Appendix 1 Curriculum overview for Years 7 to 11

2026–2027 half-termly programme. Students are assessed each half-term. The detailed map identifies individual lessons; Year 11 Summer 2 is allocated to exams.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7	Lifestyle and transition	Relationships and consent	British values, human rights and democracy	Keeping safe online and in relationships	Society and multicultural Britain	Physical and mental wellbeing
Year 8	Health and wellbeing	Personal safety and managing risk	Belonging and community	The online world	Healthy and unhealthy relationships	Managing money
Year 9	Mental health and wellbeing	Careers and future choices	Drug education	Managing risk in relation to the law	Intimate sexual relationships	Navigating online harms
Year 10	Independence, health choices and wellbeing	Navigating the online world	Friendship, diversity and challenging extremism	Managing influence	Exploring consent and recognising abuse	Study, work and careers
Year 11	Life-long wellbeing	Drugs and personal safety	Safe relationships and sexual health	Families, fertility and pregnancy	Managing and maintaining health	

Appendix 2 Sixth form curriculum overview

The Years 12–13 programme extends learning for adult relationships, wellbeing and independent life. The sequence below follows the supplied 2026–2027 curriculum map.

Half term	Year 12	Year 13
Autumn 1	Healthy relationships, boundaries and consent	Online life and harm
Autumn 2	Economic wellbeing and careers education	Mental health and wellbeing
Spring 1	Harmful behaviours	Healthy lifestyles and personal safety
Spring 2	Contraception and parenthood	Drug education
Summer 1	Sexual health	Exams
Summer 2	Inclusion and discrimination	No unit specified in the supplied map

Year 12 includes intimacy, power imbalances, harmful attitudes, contraception, pregnancy, STIs, HIV, equality and harassment. Year 13 includes image sharing, pornography and AI, mental health, personal safety, first aid, addiction and access to support.

Assessment takes place each half-term during taught provision and is used to provide feedback and address misconceptions. Exam periods do not introduce a new teaching unit.