



**Personal, Social, Health, Economic  
(PSHE) Education Policy**  
**Including Relationships and Health Education  
statutory from September 2020, and our position  
on Sex Education**

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## INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Ashley Park School is an independent school providing specialist education for children and young people aged 10 – 16 with a range of Complex Needs. All of our children and young people have significant barriers to learning due to their complex learning difficulties and disabilities in the area of autistic spectrum conditions, moderate to severe learning difficulties, associated medical and health issues and moderate mental health conditions. All of our young people are extremely vulnerable and many have experienced disruption to formal education. For some pupils, this has resulted in long periods of absence which has impacted on their self-esteem and self-confidence.

At Ashley Park School we believe all young people deserve the right to an education that will support them to become happy and confident individuals with skills, qualifications and achievements that will support them in their future. The overriding aim of our curriculum and wider work is to achieve the best possible outcomes for our young people in terms of individual learning, independence, personal growth and development and personal safety. We aim to provide pupils with an understanding about the wider world to enable them to make informed, appropriate choices and decisions where possible. Our PSHE curriculum is flexible, adaptable and robust enough to meet the ever changing demands of the modern world, and best prepare our young people for a life within it.

## PSHE

At Ashley Park School, we teach Personal, Social, Health, Economic education as a whole-school approach to underpin our students' development as people because we believe this best supports their learning capacity. We follow the PSHE Education Planning Framework for Pupils with SEND written by the PSHE Association (see Appendix 1 & Appendix 2) to ensure our curriculum integrates, but is not limited to, the new statutory content. Our Personal, Social, Health, Economic education also includes Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), Life Skills, enterprise, financial capacity and Careers education (following the Gatsby Benchmarks as part of the DfE Careers Strategy).

Our broad and balanced PSHE curriculum helps our young people to become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of British Values and their duties and rights. It encourages pupils to make a positive contribution to the life of their school, neighbourhood, communities and the wider world. It encourages respect for different nation, religious and ethnic identities. It also helps students to develop an understanding of career managements and employability skills as well as developing an understanding about the world of work.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

“The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education...They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.”

**DfE Guidance p.8**

In Key Stage 1 and 2 we teach Relationships education with Sex education being taught discretely in line with cognition and receptive understanding (This is determined in consultation with the Clinical Team, SMT and parents), with all Key Stages being taught Health Education, thus following the statutory guidance as set out by the Department of Education and the Independent School Standards. **(Due to the nature of needs and the pupil's cognitive ability-We follow K1/2 curriculum to support their learning and emotional development. Should it be possible for Students to access the KS3/4 curriculum, class teacher will plan for this in line with student ability)**

In addition, at Ashley Park School:

- Teaching reflects the law and teaches about applicable laws so that pupils are clear on rights and responsibilities
- Teaching is sensitive, inclusive, and age-appropriate
- Teaching is inclusive to meet the needs of all pupils so that they are able to understand the importance of quality and respect
- We work closely with parents and are respectful of pupils' and parents' backgrounds and beliefs
- We communicate the right to request withdrawal from some or all of the sex education
- We will take into account the age and religious background of all pupils
- We make sure that RSHE is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- We teach about LGBT+ content at integrated and timely point
- The staff team and wider community model positive relationships

Ashley Park School complies with the Equality Act 2010:

- We will not treat pupils with protected characteristics (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation less favourably.
- We will make reasonable adjustments and take positive action to alleviate disadvantage, being mindful of the SEND Code of Practice.
- We will regularly review our Accessibility Plan to ensure we are taking positive action towards inclusivity.

## DEFINITIONS

**Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

**Health Education** is focused on teaching pupils how to make good decisions about their own physical health and mental wellbeing. It involves learning about what is normal and what is an issue and teaches pupils how and who to seek support when needed.

## CURRICULUM DELIVERY

“Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in the DfE guidance 2019 in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons.”

DfE Guidance p.8

At Ashley Park School, we include the statutory Relationships and Health Education and Sex Education within our whole-school Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of Relationships and Sex Education are also taught within the science curriculum to some classes (dependent on the curriculum pathway).

We allocate one hour each week to teach the PSHE Framework, as well as additional timetabled PSHE lessons to focus on life skills, Careers and Personal Development. The allocated time varies dependent on the learners' needs within that class and the curriculum pathway they are following.

At Ashley Park School we use a holistic, person-centered approach to the development of our young people to ensure they achieve the best possible outcomes. Although we follow a framework that is organised into key stages, our PSHE curriculum is flexible and key stages are followed depending on the individual needs and main areas of development within that class, as opposed to their age group.

Teachers consider the needs and feelings of pupils' and deliver the content of the PSHE curriculum in a developmental and age-appropriate way suited to individual needs. Each class also accesses assemblies and has praise and reward systems in place that are personalised for their pupils.

## PRIMARY CURRICULUM CONTENT

### Relationships Education

The Key Stage 1 and 2 Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and close positive relationships
- Friendships
- Managing hurtful behaviour and bullying
- Safe relationships
- Respecting self and others

### Sex Education

The DfE Guidance 2019 (p.23) recommends that all primary schools 'have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils'.

However, 'Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools'. (p.23)

Schools are to determine the content of sex education at primary school. Sex education 'should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born'.

We define sex education as understanding human reproduction. We believe that all children at our school should have access to a sex education programme to enable them to:

- Be safe
- Be provided with the correct scientific terminology and information and taught how to use it in the right context
- Make responsible, informed and healthy choices about their lives now and in the future
- Be respectful of themselves and others to enable them to move confidently through childhood, adolescence into adulthood
- Have the understanding to develop and maintain positive and healthy relationships

### Health Education

The Key Stage 1 and 2 Health Education focuses on the following key areas:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Teaching children about puberty is now a statutory requirement which sits with the Health Education part of the DfE guidance within the 'Changing adolescent body' strand.

### **Sex Education**

#### **CURRICULUM CONTENT**

The Key Stage 2 Sex Education focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

### **Health Education**

The Key Stage 3 and 4 Health Education curriculum continues to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition covers the following content by the end of secondary:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

**See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for a more details on the curriculum content.**

#### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES**

All pupils at Ashley Park School have additional learning needs and all have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Ashley Park School is committed to providing the environment and opportunities to enable all children and young people with special educational needs to be included, fully, in all aspects of school life. We have adapted our curriculum to ensure each young person has access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is meaningful, appropriate and individually challenging.

Classroom resources are differentiated as appropriate to address the learning needs of each pupil in order for them to have full access to the contents of the PSHE and RSE curriculum. All teaching and learning opportunities are underpinned with specific objectives, based on individual needs. EHCP outcomes are integrated into the school day and embedded throughout our curriculum. In addition, our health and therapy team work closely together and in collaboration with school, parents/carers and other professionals to provide a holistic approach.

## EQUALITY

The DfE Guidance 2019 (p. 15) states, “Schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect.

Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics...”

LGBT content is integrated fully into our curriculum. It is not specifically taught as stand-alone lessons within units. All young people will be taught LGBT+ content in an age appropriate manner at a timely point in the curriculum.

At Ashley Park School we promote respect for all and value every individual child. However, we also respect the rights of our children, families and our staff to hold beliefs, religious or otherwise.

Should any content within our curriculum cause parents or carers any concern then we would invite them in to discuss these concerns with the school.

Please contact the school for any further information.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment is integral to teaching and learning in PSHE and is carried out in accordance with the whole-school policy. We use the PSHE Education Assessment Framework for Pupils with SEND to help track our young people’s progress in PSHE and identify areas of development. Our assessment is ongoing and is continually captured throughout the school day when our pupils are seen applying their skills and knowledge in real-life situations or to different subjects using Evidence for Learning. The style of assessment used is non-threatening and promotes the young people’s self-esteem. There are clearly defined links between objectives and assessment. The criteria by which the work is to be judged are shared and accessible by the young people, where appropriate. Assessment is continuous and the outcomes of the process are used to inform subsequent teaching. Young people receive regular feedback from their teachers concerning their progress and achievement and this is communicated to parents, carers and associated professionals in termly subject reports and in the statutory annual review documentation.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory components of RSE.

### Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE
- Communicating with parents when Sex Education is being delivered

Teachers are timetabled to deliver PSHE lessons to classes for the full academic year to ensure consistency, but PSHE is not always taught to classes by their form tutor.

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

### **PSHE Subject Lead**

The PSHE Subject Lead is responsible for ensuring pupils are receiving high quality PSHE lessons that are accessible and tailored to individual needs. They will ensure the framework informs planning, teaching and assessment. They will share knowledge, good practice and keep staff up to date with the current statutory guidance.

### **Health and Therapy Team**

Our Clinical team at Ashley Park School comprises of Clinical Child Psychologist, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists. Our team provide information to support a holistic approach to the teaching and learning of PSHE. They provide advice, guidance and resources to support staff in ensuring all young people can access our PSHE curriculum. They may also provide 1:1 support to deliver specific interventions based on individual needs.

### **Pupils**

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

## **PARENTS RIGHT TO WITHDRAW**

“Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Sex Education”

DfEGuidance p.17

All staff at Ashley Park School strongly believe that all children should have access to our sex education programme as outlined above. If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child from Sex Education lessons, then they must inform the school in writing a week prior to the lesson taking place in order that alternative arrangements can be made for the child's education.

### **Key Stage 1 and 2**

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

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.

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

There are separate rules on withdrawing a child from Sex Education. Sex education is separate from the Relationships and Health curriculum and parents can withdraw children from some or all of the lessons on Sex Education. The head teacher must grant a parent's request to withdraw a child beforehand, and it's useful to have good conversations with parents so that they understand fully what their child will be taught.

Before making a request, parents should:

Ask the school about what will be taught in Sex Education, and when.

Remember that the science curriculum in all schools includes content on human development, which includes human reproduction.

Remember there is no right for a parent to withdraw their child from the science curriculum.

## **Key Stage 2 (Sex Education)**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

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

## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – we wrote to parents to outline our plans for what is going to be taught and how. Parents and stakeholder views are considered. This policy will be shared with parents. Parents will be invited to share their views.
- Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their PSHE and RSE lessons
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

## **POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The senior leadership team monitor this policy on an annual basis