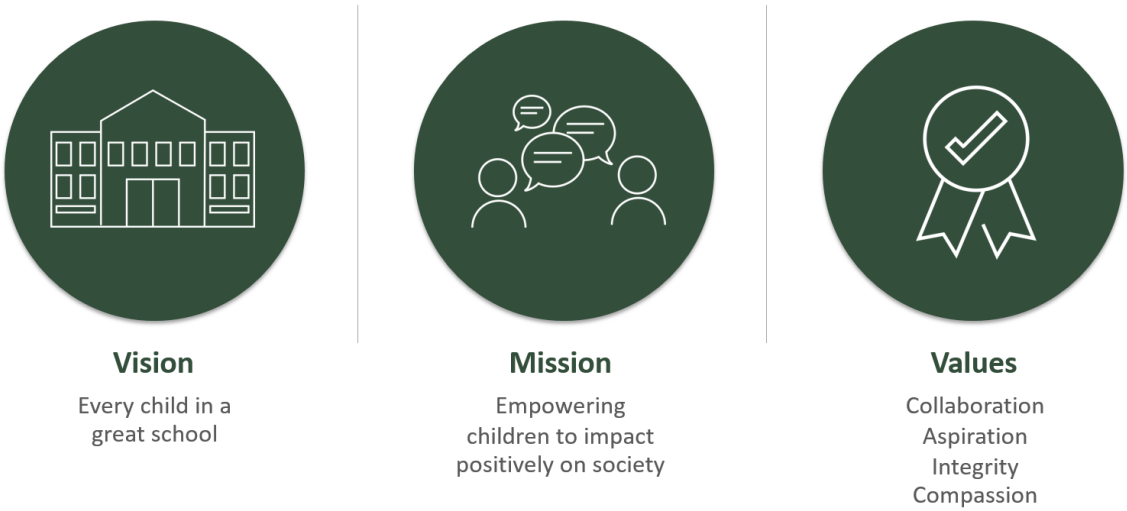
WeST Secondary Relationships, Sex and Education (RSE) Policy

Person(s) responsible for updating the policy:	Kate McPherson
Date approved by Trustees:	
Date of next review:	September 2026
Status:	Statutory

Mission, Vision and Values



WeST Core Values
WeST holds four core values which underpin the engagement, motivation and retention of employees, no matter what their role in the organisation.

- **Collaboration**
  Creating a shared vision and working effectively across boundaries in an equitable and inclusive way to skilfully influence and engage others. Building and securing value from relationships, developing self and others to achieve positive outcomes.
- **Aspiration**
  Having high expectations, modelling the delivery of high quality outcomes. Showing passion, persistence and resilience in seeking creative solutions to strive for continuous improvement and excellence.
- **Integrity**
  Acting always with the interests of children and young people at our heart, and with a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles. Communicating with transparency and respect, creating a working environment based on trust and honesty.
- **Compassion**
  Recognising need in others and acting with positive intention to promote well-being and improve outcomes.

Providing Accessible Formats
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1 Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

2 Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.
We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

- Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education - Statutory Guidance (2019)

At Coombe Dean, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3 Policy development

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

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance

2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations

3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy

4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE

5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governor hubs and ratified

4 Definition

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.

5 Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.
We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.
For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

6 Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). RSE content is taught within an age-appropriate way and delivered through a spiral curriculum. RSE will be covered throughout KS3-5 during the Relationship theme of the curriculum. SEND Students are supported throughout the delivery of the RSE topic in accordance with their 'Pupil Passports.'

RSE 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

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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).
We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

6.1 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
    - Safe and supported
    - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
    - A whole-class setting
    - Small groups or targeted sessions
    - 1-to-1 discussions
    - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation and adaptive teaching needed.

6.2 Use of resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

7 Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. More detail is set out in the Westcountry Schools Trust Visiting Speakers policy.

We **will**:

- Carry out appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and they and the resources they intend to use:
    - Are age-appropriate
    - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
    - Comply with:
        - This policy
        - The Teachers' Standards
        - The Equality Act 2010
        - The Human Rights Act 1998
        - The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
    - What they're going to say
    - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

8 Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The Trust board

The Trust board will approve the over-arching template WeST RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation at a local level via the Directors of Education and Inclusion.

8.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 9).

8.3 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

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.

The lead teacher for RSE in our school is Mrs Kate McPherson.

8.4 Pupils

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

9 Parents' right to withdraw

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. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy 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 school work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Three terms before they turn 16, **a student can opt back into sex education lessons**. The school has a duty to provide sex education during one of the remaining three terms.

10 Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11 Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Kate McPherson, Assistant Headteacher, through:
CPD
Learning walks
Work scrutinies
Support for new teachers
Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

The WeST template policy will be reviewed every three years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board. WeST schools will then be asked to provide local adjustments. The Director of Inclusion will monitor this.

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

The Personal Development (Pt) curriculum outlines what students will learn across the school year to support their personal growth, wellbeing, and preparation for adult life. The programme is aligned with statutory PSHE guidance and is designed to help students develop healthy relationships, make informed choices, and understand their place in the wider world.

Personal Development at Coombe Dean is about helping students **live** our values, stay **safe** and healthy, **respect** others, and be **ready** for life beyond school.

Year	Term 1 Health & wellbeing	Term 2 Living in the wider world	Term 3 Relationships	Term 4 Relationships	Term 5 Living in the wider world	Term 6 Health & wellbeing
Year 7	Introduction to Personal Development - resilience; Online safety; Personal hygiene; Managing Unwanted contact and FGM	Careers what is work?; Enterprise skills; Raising aspirations and career stereotypes; Recognising your money personality	Introduction to relationships – understanding different types of relationships; friendships, bullying and misogyny; Identifying healthy and unhealthy relationships - including online	Consent - how to seek and withdraw, Protected characteristics; Self-awareness and peer pressure	Introduction to budgeting; Savings and loans; British values; First aid basic life support	Smoking and vaping; Enrichment week; First aid and basic life support – managing bleeds
Year 8	Introduction to Personal Development - sleep / personal hygiene; Body image; Healthy eating and eating disorders; Healthy and unhealthy coping mechanisms	The journey to your career; Skills and qualities; Linking subjects and the world of work; Understanding value for money and financial dilemmas	Year 8; Introduction to relationships - community and diversity; Gender identity; Consent and the law	Managing challenging content online; Online relationships & life online; Self-esteem and boundary setting.	Understanding the Labour market - Unifrog; Financial choices and budgeting; British values - rule of law;	First aid basic life support; Mental health, anxiety and depression; First aid head injuries
Year 9	Introduction to Personal Development - starting the GCSE journey; Online safety - cyberbullying; Online safety - imagine	Setting goals as part of the GCSE options; Exploring personal strengths; Which way / career options; Earning money and budgeting	Introduction to relationships - freedom and consent; Abusive relationships; Contraception and the risk of STI	Gender equality and stereotypes; Relationship changes and break ups; Family relationships and parenting	Gambling risks; STEM careers; Employability and online presence;	First aid basic life support; The problem with social media; First aid choking

	sharing; Peer pressure alcohol and drugs					
Year 10	Introduction to Personal Development - health aware; Teenage pregnancy; Gangs / county lines; Impact of drugs	Work experience preparation; CV writing; Interview preparation.	Introduction to relationships – consent and assertive communication; Dangers of pornography; Domestic violence and abuse	Peer pressure & exploitation; Online relationships and exploitation; Friendships and gangs	Managing finances and the world of work unifrog; The impact of advertising on financial decisions / credit and debit cards; Challenges and rewards of work	First aid basic life support; Happiness - connection with others; Work experience; First aid bone, muscle and joint injuries
Year 11	Introduction to Personal Development - personal values; Sexual health and STI; Pregnancy and outcomes; Self efficacy and stress management	Personal branding lesson; How to write a Personal statement; Personal statement writing; Interviews	Introduction to relationships - developing healthy relationships; Diversity in relationships; Faith and cultural expectations	Changing circumstances; Victim blaming; Unwanted attention; First aid basic life support	GCSE exams / exit timetable	GCSE exams / exit timetable

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	● That there are different types of committed, stable relationships ● How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children ● What marriage is, including their legal status, e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony ● Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into ● The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships ● The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting ● How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	● The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship ● Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships ● How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) ● That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs ● About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help ● That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control ● What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable ● The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	● Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online ● About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online ● Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them ● What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online ● The impact of viewing harmful content ● That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners ● That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail ● How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	● The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships ● How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	● How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship ● 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 ● The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women ● That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others ● That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex ● The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available ● The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage ● That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) ● How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing ● About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment ● How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour ● How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	

POLICY HISTORY

Policy Date	Summary of change	Contact / Responsibility for Policy	Version/ Implementation Date	Review Date
March 2023	New trust-wide policy to be adapted at local level by schools	R Woodland, Director of Inclusion	TBC	Annual