# RHSE Policy

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| ***Approved by:*** | ***Interim Executive Board*** |
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| ***Review by:*** | ***Annually*** |

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## 1. RSHE policy summary

This is a summary of Laycock Primary School health relationships and sex education (RSHE) policy. This policy will act as a central reference point to inform school staff, parent/carers, health professionals and visiting speakers of the school's approach to RSHE within PSHE education.

This summary, with the school's RSHE curriculum, will be circulated to all staff and given to visiting speakers. Senior staff and staff teaching PSHE education should read the whole document. The RSHE policy is made available to staff and parent/carers on our website at: https://laycock.islington.sch.uk/pshe/

The RSHE policy will be monitored by the PSHE leader and reviewed on an annual basis.

## 2. Purpose of RSHE policy

Health, relationships and sex education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. RSHE within PSHE education aims to give children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitive relationships and the skills to stay safe both off and online. It enables pupils to explore their own and other's attitudes and values and builds their self-esteem and confidence.

This policy sets out the school's approach to relationships and sex education and acts as the school's central reference point to inform school staff, parents/carers, health professionals and visiting speakers of the school's approach to RSHE within personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.

It is available on our school website and copies are available upon request.

## 3. Legislation

Primary and secondary schools are legally required to have a written policy for Relationships Education and RSE, in line with statutory guidance Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (effective from September 2020).

DfE guidance encourages primary schools to teach age-appropriate sex education however it is not a statutory requirement. Under this legislation, all primary schools are required to teach relationships education and all schools are required to teach health education (which includes some aspects of RSHE).

## 4. Policy development, including consultation process

The member of staff responsible for the co-ordination, development, monitoring and evaluation of RSHE is Aisha Khan, PSHE leader.

The Interim Executive Board (IEB) have further oversight of the RSHE curriculum.

## 5. Definition and purpose of RSHE policy

We define health, relationships and sex education as learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.

Through RSHE within PSHE education we aim to give children and young people essential information and skills for building positive, enjoyable and respectful relationships and staying safe both off and online. It enables pupils to explore their own and others' attitudes and values and aims to help build their self- esteem and confidence. There is clearly considerable overlap between Health, Relationship and Sex education when covering certain topics.

As well as the requirement to teach relationships education, the DfE encourages primary schools to also teach age-appropriate sex education.

We define 'sex education' as education about sexual anatomy, reproduction and sexual intercourse. In primary school this includes: learning the correct medical terms for sexual body parts, the biological differences between males and females, changes throughout the human life cycle (including during puberty), menstruation and wet dreams, understanding sexual intercourse and how babies are made and possibly a basic understanding about contraception.

We believe that sex education is best taught as part of an integrated programme of health, relationships and sex education (RSHE) within PSHE education, in which sex is discussed in the context of respectful, healthy, adult relationships. Schools will want to consider, in consultation with parents and governors, the exact nature of the content to be covered here.

## 6. RSHE curriculum, including answering pupils' questions

The RSHE curriculum has been planned with regard to the statutory guidance and the age and stage of pupils, and feedback from pupils, parents and staff. The RSHE curriculum links to, and has been planned to complement, learning in science, citizenship, RE and computing. On occasions, it may be supplemented by drop-down days, assemblies, theatre productions, visiting speakers and/or discussions in tutor time/circle time.

Teachers of RSHE will have regard to the guidance on good practice in RSHE teaching and learning especially about establishing a safe/supportive environment and distancing techniques including not asking (or answering) personal questions.

**Answering pupils' questions**

Teachers should have regard to the age and stage of the pupil(s) in answering their questions, both within PSHE lessons and the broader context of the curriculum plan for PSHE across the school. As far as possible, the principle is to answer appropriate questions openly and factually to address any misconceptions.

All classes have an 'Ask it' box to be used in these lessons. Any question that is not linked to the age related curriculum will not be answered.

If unsure how to answer, or whether a question is appropriate or relevant to the whole class, a teacher can:

- speak to a pupil individually
- suggest that the pupil asks their parent/carer
- offer to find out the best way to answer the question and use the opportunity to discuss with a colleague and respond to the pupil at a later point

**7. Roles and responsibilities in school, including CPD**

The member of staff responsible for the co-ordination, development, monitoring and evaluation of RSHE is Aisha Khan, PSHE leader.

RSHE is taught by all class teachers.

The Interim Executive Board (IEB) have further oversight of the RSHE curriculum.

Any concerns regarding pupils that may emerge from the delivery of RSHE may be referred to the DSL within school who is Fred Hall, or the deputies: Simon Cardy or Dexter Thompson.

The PSHE leader will consider the RSHE training needs of staff and parents. RSHE training may be provided as whole staff briefing or training, training for selected staff, in-class support, and discussion with the PSHE lead as appropriate.

The policy is on the school website and is saved in our Policies folder. All staff should familiarise themselves with the policy and refer to it as necessary.

The PSHE leader will provide any visiting speakers with a copy of the policy in advance.

**8. RSHE and safeguarding children**

At Laycock Primary school we believe that alongside our safeguarding procedures, educating every pupil about how to care for their bodies and protect themselves from physical and emotional harm is an important element of our work to keep pupils safe from harm.

**RSHE within PSHE education enables pupils to:**

- know their rights to be protected and kept safe
- understand potential dangers they could face
- be encouraged to adopt safe and responsible practices and deal sensibly with risk
- develop personal skills to protect themselves and others from unsafe influences and physical and emotional harm
- know when and who to ask for help when needed.

**Our PSHE curriculum can also include a range of potential issues such as:**

- bullying, including cyber bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, and so on) and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability, and homophobic and transphobic abuse
- radicalisation and extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation
- sexting, sending of sexual images
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to local area or population, for example, gang activity and youth violence
- particular issues affecting children including domestic violence, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation (FGM) see appendix 5 and forced marriages.

Effective RSHE, in bringing an understanding of what is and is not appropriate in a relationship, and providing a safe space, can occasionally lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff have a duty to report concerns about pupils who we feel are at risk of harm or have suffered harm (including when we suspect that FGM has already been performed), to the DSL or a deputy, as described in our safeguarding policy. Visiting speakers when working in the classroom are bound by the same conditions and must pass on any information they feel needs responding to via the member of staff present or directly to the school's DSL.

In addition, teachers have a mandatory duty to report known cases of FGM **to the police**. They should ring the non-emergency 101 number within 48 hours, make a note of their actions and record the police reference number as evidence that they have complied with the duty. It does not apply if the teacher knows that another professional has already reported the same act of FGM.

**Safeguarding young people who may be involved in underage sexual activity**

Sexual activity is illegal for young people under the age of 16.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, a child aged 12 or under is not capable of consenting to sexual activity and penetrative sex is classified as rape. Therefore, if a child under the age of 13 discloses penetrative sex or other intimate sexual activity, the member of staff should always treat this as a safeguarding concern and talk to the DSL.

We also know that some young people may be sexually active before 16. Guidance from the Crown Prosecution Service states that, as long as neither partner is under 13, 'pupils of the same or similar age are highly unlikely to be prosecuted for engaging in sexual activity, where the activity is mutually agreed and there is no abuse or exploitation'. It is therefore not a requirement to report knowledge of a young person's underage sexual activity. However, a member of staff should discuss any cases of concern with the DSL.

All children and young people, whatever their experience, background or identity, are entitled to good quality RSHE that help them build a positive sense of self. The RSHE programme and approach is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, disability, ethnicity, culture, age,

faith or belief or any other life experience. RSHE lessons help pupils to explore discrimination, prejudice, bullying, aggressive behaviour and other unhealthy relationships.

Staff working with pupils cannot offer unconditional or absolute confidentiality. Staff have an obligation to inform pupils of this and to pass information on to the school's designated safeguarding lead if what is disclosed indicates that a pupil is at risk of harm.

If pupils disclose to visiting speakers, then the visitor should report this to staff for school follow up.

**9. Inclusion in RSHE**

Teachers agree to work within the school's framework for RSHE as described in this policy. Their personal beliefs, values and attitudes should not affect their teaching of RSE.

Staff approach RSHE sensitively, knowing that their pupils are all different and have different family groupings.

*"Provisions within allow schools to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic. This should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects. A school, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment."*

*"Schools should consider the makeup of their own student body, including the gender and age range of their pupils, and consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics (which mean that they are potentially at greater risk). Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment, which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole-school approach."*

*"Schools should refer to the Department's advice, Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. The advice sets out what sexual violence and sexual harassment are, the current evidence on their preponderance in schools and colleges, how to minimise the risk of them occurring and what to do when they do occur or are alleged to have occurred."*

**10. Working with parents and carers including a Parent's right to withdraw**

The school works in partnership with parents/carers to educate children and young people about relationships and sex, informing them regularly on the content of the RSHE programme.

The Health Education, Relationships Education, and Sex Education (RSHE) Regulations set out parents' right to withdraw their children from sex education other than that which is part of relationships education, health education or other National Curriculum subjects (such as biological aspects of human growth and reproduction within National Curriculum science). It is required that parents/carers arrange to meet with the Headteacher to discuss this.

Visiting speakers are briefed by the appropriate member of staff about the level of pupil awareness; ground rules of the class; the context/purpose of the visit and what pupils know and what they need to know. Visiting speakers are given a summary of the school RSHE policy, together with the RSHE curriculum which they are expected to follow.

Parents are the primary educators of their children about health, relationships and sex, particularly with regard to their views and values. We intend that our school's RSHE should complement parents'/carers' role in RSHE and we view this as a very important partnership. To this end, the school will inform parents/carers wherever possible to decide on curriculum content, the exact terminology used in sex education lessons and at which stages during their child's education

particular content is introduced. It is hoped that by this information session there will be clear understanding regarding RSHE provision.

**The school**

As well as being involved in the policy consultation process, the school informs and works with parents in the following ways:

- Special parents' evenings where the RSHE programme is discussed during Y2-6
- Before RSHE lessons in years 2-6 letter to parents/carers is sent out describing the RSHE their children will cover. In this way, parents/carers can be prepared to have conversations at home ● Workshops for parents on how to confidently talk to their children about sex and relationships ● Information in newsletters and on the school website.

**Parents' right to withdraw**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, set out the rights of parents/carers to withdraw pupils from sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education).

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from some or all of sex education which does not fall within relationships education, health education or other National Curriculum subjects i.e. Science. Head teachers will grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum after meeting with them following their letter of withdrawal.

The details of the school's planned programme of RSHE shows which aspects of the RSHE programme are within statutory relationships or health education, and which are 'sex education' and are therefore aspects from which parents have the right to withdraw their child.

If parents would like to request that their child be excused from RSHE, they should notify the school in writing.

Parents will be encouraged to discuss the decision with the Headteacher. They will be informed what the National Curriculum content is and what curriculum content their child can be withdrawn from. (See appendix 2: the school's planned programme of RSHE and appendix 4 Science national curriculum relationships and sex education). Parents will be made aware that there may be impromptu or incidental discussion of relationships and sex education topics in the classroom / in other subjects at times, from which it is not possible to withdraw pupils.

*"Good practice is also likely to include the head teacher discussing with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social, and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher"* Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance

If the parents still decide to withdraw their child then other arrangements will be agreed and made for them during this time. Parents will be encouraged to deliver sex education with their child at home instead.

**11. Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually.