



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

## Relationships, sex and health education policy

Approved by the LGB, November 2022

### Principles

Queen Mary's Grammar School is committed to helping and supporting its pupils in their physical, social, emotional and moral development. This policy has been created in partnership with parents, but final decisions on its content are undertaken by the school. The policy wasn't created in partnership with parents. Instead, suggest: "Parents are informed about curriculum content and their right to withdraw their child(ren) on an annual basis and are invited to ask questions, make comments and view lesson materials, but final decisions on curriculum rest with the school."

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is a statutory requirement for secondary school pupils, and the mandatory curriculum can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

### Aims

Queen Mary's Grammar School aims to provide young people with:

- the means to safeguard themselves in their current and future sexual and non-sexual relationships
- relationship and personal skills that prepare them for the challenges of the teenage years and beyond
- opportunities to explore their own values and others' and develop their own moral framework
- opportunities to understand and support difference and diversity
- an understanding of their own and others' bodies, including how to maintain good physical and mental health
- the ability to know where to seek help and advice
- high self-esteem, self-awareness and emotional health
- an awareness of the right they have over their own body and others have over theirs
- the skills to be assertive and develop good communication skills in literacy and oracy
- the knowledge, skills and attributes to make informed choices
- the ability to respect the right of others to hold opinions that differ from their own as long as these views do not impact on the rights of others
- the ability to take responsibility for and accept the consequences of their own actions

When delivering these lessons, the religious background of all pupils will be taken into account so that the topics are handled appropriately, and faith perspectives on a number of topics such as relationships and families will be explored in Religion, Philosophy & Ethics (RPE) lessons. Suggested addition: "In PSHEE lessons, it is acknowledged that religion, culture and many other factors will influence the decisions people make about their lives, and pupils will only be directed against decisions that are illegal or harmful. When exploring issues relating to relationships and sex, a range of perspectives will be acknowledged, and pupils will be encouraged to make the decisions that are right for them once they have critically evaluated all of the factors that are influencing them."

### Withdrawal of Pupils

- The governmental guidelines state that parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships or health education
- Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from some aspects of sex education, but not what is taught as part of the National Curriculum for science (i.e. puberty, menstruation and reproduction). Parents are advised to consider that it may be preferable for their child to learn about sex from a trained professional in a controlled environment, however, rather than for them to be misinformed by unreliable sources Suggested addition: such as their friends or unreliable or even harmful sources online.
- Any request for withdrawal from sex education should be done in writing to the Headmaster and parents

opting out are advised to also meet with him to discuss the matter; however, a child can request to opt back into sex education without their parents' consent or knowledge from three terms before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, and if they opt back in, the school has a duty to provide them with sex education.

- A child may not opt out of sex education him/herself; however arrangements will be made during sex education lessons so that all pupils feel comfortable and safe, such as opting out of individual activities. Suggest change to: 'On and after their 15th birthday, a child may opt out of sex education themselves. However, a member of staff will discuss this with them first to establish their reasons and ensure that they understand the potential drawbacks of withdrawal, plus suggest options for remaining in sex education lessons but making such lessons as comfortable and safe as possible. Single-sex lessons will not be offered in Years 12 and 13 however, as it is valuable for pupils to hear the views, thoughts and feelings from the opposite sex in order to break down sex-based barriers, misconceptions and prejudice.'
- A supervised room will be provided for any pupils whose parents have opted them out of sex education, and alternative study will be provided

### **Safeguarding of Pupils**

- All pupils are required during RSHE lessons to adhere to a set of ground rules, in order to create a safe learning environment for all. These generally include listening to others, keeping anecdotes anonymous and being non-judgemental.
- All pupils are offered the opportunity of "time out" if they feel vulnerable during a lesson
- Heads of Year are made aware in advance of lessons taking place where pupils may feel vulnerable and talk to them to see whether they would prefer to sit the lesson out. Suggest change to: 'PSHEE teaching staff are made aware through weekly staff briefing notes of pupils who may feel vulnerable during lessons that cover sensitive topics, and will bear these pupils in mind when planning and delivering the lesson content.'
- Pupils are made aware of and reminded which particular members of staff are responsible for their welfare, in case a pupil needs to make a disclosure
- All staff are trained annually in the school's safeguarding procedures

### **Confidentiality:**

- Pupils will be encouraged to talk to a trusted adult if they have any concerns regarding their relationships. This may not necessarily be a parent or carer.
- As long as there are no safeguarding concerns, these conversations will be treated confidentially
- If, as a result of a conversation with a pupil, concerns are raised regarding a pupil's safety, the normal safeguarding procedures will be followed

### **Catering for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):**

- All staff have access to a database which lists SEND learners and are therefore aware of which learners in their classes have SEND
- All staff receive regular training from the SEND department (Mrs Youngman and Mrs Swain) regarding different types of special educational needs and disabilities and how to adapt teaching so that learners with SEND can make progress
- Some staff have completed additional training on supporting the mental health of SEND pupils
- Particularly vulnerable learners with SEND are monitored within lessons dealing with sensitive topics, and as with all learners, there is a "time-out" option
- Some lesson activities may be adapted for SEND learners to allow them to access the tasks
- In PSHEE, all pupils will have lessons on Autism and other aspects of neurodiversity and disability so that SEND learners feel understood and supported by their peers

### **Action is carried out by:**

- Most RSHE lessons are delivered by the designated co-ordinator of the PSHEE programme Mrs McPhee Mrs McPhee (Head of PSHEE & Wellbeing Education) and Ms Morgan (Teacher of PSHEE), using materials endorsed by the PSHE Association or provided by other experts in the field. Lesson plans are available upon request so that you parents and carers may continue the conversation with your their child at home, and are updated annually in line with current developments and trends. Interested parties can also find out more about PSHEE lessons via the departmental Twitter account: @qmgs\_pshe.
- Some aspects of RSHE are covered in science, biology, PE or RPE lessons

- Walsall School Nurses, who may be consulted regarding individual concerns or deliver workshops within school. They also run a text service for Walsall pupils, where children and young people can contact them with any concerns they may have on 07480 635363
- The pastoral teams, who liaise with the PSHEE Coordinator Head of PSHEE & Wellbeing Education, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Collins) and the Headmaster if individual problems and concerns are brought to their notice (see Safeguarding Policy for more information)
- Miss Burgess (Social, Emotional and Mental Health Mentor), Mr Farnell (Safeguarding and Welfare Officer), Mrs Mohan (Sixth Form Operations Manager, also responsible for girls' welfare) are also available to support individual pupils - plus others?
- All members of staff are trained regularly in safeguarding procedures at QMGS and report concerns via the CPOMS reporting system
- Reputable external speakers during off-timetable events relating to RSHE
- A new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion society is being set up for 2021-22 - I'm not aware of this?
- Mrs Walker (Librarian) advises on recommended reading for RSHE topics

### **Appendix 1 – Sequence of RSHE delivery**

The PSHEE Scheme of Work for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 is available upon request by emailing the school. Key Stages 3 and 4, which includes, but is not limited to, RSHE lessons, can be viewed via the following weblink:  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13exjF1oRGvTPJXihRw-ljtwm0Uq68nZpB\\_ZixBoMO5E/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13exjF1oRGvTPJXihRw-ljtwm0Uq68nZpB_ZixBoMO5E/edit?usp=sharing)  
 These lessons will be delivered by the PSHEE Coordinator, Mrs S. McPhee.

Aside from lessons with an explicit RSHE focus, mental health will also be mentioned briefly in connection to the following PSHEE topics:

- Neurodiversity and autism awareness
- Exploring career options
- Your digital tattoo
- Things you see online
- Propaganda
- Gambling
- Sharing content online

However, this is not an exhaustive list.

Some elements of RSHE will be covered in RPE, as the GCSE course includes a unit of work on Relationships and Families. That unit encompasses some of the statutory elements of RSHE:

- Different types of relationships
- Marriage
- Roles and responsibilities of parents
- How to identify trustworthy sources
- Stereotypes
- Criminal behaviour
- Sexual harassment
- Equality
- FGM
- Forced marriage

The following elements of the new guidance will be covered in science and biology

- Hormones during menstruation
- Blood, organ and stem cell donation
- Antibiotics
- How germs (including viruses and bacteria) are spread
- Immunisation and vaccination

In PE, aspects of health education are not taught explicitly as a planned lesson or series of lessons, but are touched on continuously throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. This may take the form of a class, small group, team or individual discussion as appropriate, such as healthy diet and lifestyle in Year 7 and personal hygiene in Year 9.

Parents with concerns or questions about this policy can e-mail the school at the designated e-mail address: [rshe@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:rshe@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk).

**This policy is due for review November 2023 and will be revised annually.**