



# MARY ELLIOT ACADEMY

## Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Relationships and Health Education (RSE) Policy

Version: **2**

Ratified by the Board of Trustees

Signed by the Board of Trustees:

**September 2025**

To be reviewed annually:

**September 2026**

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## 1. Aims

Through our PSHE/RSE curriculum, we aim that our students will:

- Have the appropriate tailored experiences, skills and knowledge to prepare them for life after Mary Elliot.
- Develop strong foundation skills based upon self-awareness, physical and mental well-being and societal skills.
- Develop learners positive mental health through engaging and fulfilling experiences that assist their cultural capital.
- To develop their understanding of feeling safe and nurtured and to be able to communicate how they are feeling and when they are not feeling safe.
- Learn to make informed choices;
- Be participants in a positive, democratic society;
- To experience, form and maintain positive relationships;
- Understand and manage their emotions;
- Use the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies and are prepared for puberty;
- Have opportunities to consider issues which may affect their own lives and/or the lives of others;
- Acquire a wide and varied range of developmentally appropriate knowledge and skills that promote the three key themes of family, friendship, and safety.

## 2. Statutory Requirements

As a Secondary academy we must provide relationships and sex education to all students under section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

We do not have to follow the National Curriculum but we are expected to offer all students a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

At Mary Elliot Academy we tailor the curriculum content to the student's individual needs and developmental stages. We ensure that our teaching is 'sensitive, age- appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.' as per section 35 of the [Relationships Education,](#)

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 government statutory guidance.

In teaching RSE, we are 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.

The Act states that 'Special Schools have a particularly sensitive role to play. Children with learning difficulties are entitled to the same opportunity as other children to benefit from sex education. They may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable, and in being warned and prepared against unacceptable behaviour by adults. Schools should bear in mind that some parents may find it difficult to come to terms with the idea that their children will one day become sexually active'.

We must also have regard to our 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

At Mary Elliot Academy we teach RSE/PSHE as set out in this policy.

### **3. Policy Development**

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

- a) Review - a member of staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
- b) Staff consultation - all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
- c) Parental/Stakeholder consultation - parents/stakeholders were invited to feedback on the curriculum during the consultation period.
- d) Ratification - once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the Board of Trustees and ratified.

#### 4. Definition

At Mary Elliot Academy PSHE/RSE is about the emotional, social, and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, 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.

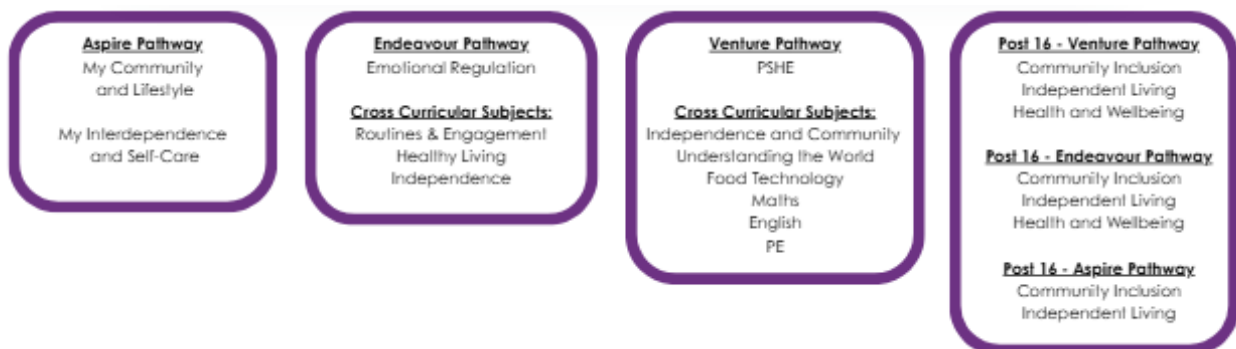
#### 5. Curriculum

The PSHE Curriculum is designed to give every student in each curriculum pathway the essential skills and experiences to develop awareness of themselves, their unique identity and their understanding of the world around them. These personalised skills are built upon during students time at Mary Elliot to ensure that they are 'prepared for life' when they leave.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

#### 6. Delivery of PSHE/RSE

Mary Elliot Academy uses personalised teaching strategies to deliver PSHE and RSE to our students. It is taught overtly through our Personal, Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE) curriculum. PSHE is delivered through various pathway subjects. The learning opportunities align with students EHCP outcomes and supports progress and a strong focus on preparing for adulthood.



Where students are able to access the information we will ensure that they are made aware of aspects of law that relate to sexual activity. Relationships and Sex will be taught in the context of celebrating diversity. All teaching resources shall be scrutinised by the Subject Lead and Extended Leadership Team.

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

These skills 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).

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.

## **7. Inclusivity**

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

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

We will also:

Make sure that students 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 needed.

## **8. Use of Resources**

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

- a) Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- b) Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- c) Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- d) Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- e) Fit into our curriculum plan
- f) Are from credible sources
- g) Are compatible with effective teaching approaches

Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress

## **9. The 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 students. 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.

### **9.1. We will:**

Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about PSHE and RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:

- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with students' developmental stage

### **9.2. Comply with:**

This policy:

- The [Teachers' Standards](#)
  - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
  - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
  - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- 9.3. Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- 9.4. Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- 9.5. Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- 9.6. Be clear on:
- What they're going to say
  - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- 9.7. Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- 9.8. Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- 9.9. Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- 9.10. Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- 9.11. Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session

9.12. Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

9.13. 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

## **10. Role and Responsibilities**

10.1. **The Subject Lead, SLT and ELT have the following responsibilities:**

- To lead the review of the PSHE policy:
- To ensure that the resources used are relevant and appropriate to the needs of the students;
- To lead an evaluation of the PSHE policy and curriculum;
- To ensure that staff have the necessary skills, confidence, knowledge and resources in order to deliver effective PSHE;
- To develop and maintain an effective assessment and monitoring system.

10.2. **The head teacher**

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that PSHE is taught consistently across the school.

10.3. **The board of trustees**

- The board of trustees will approve the PSHE/RSE policy, ensure it is up to date, have processes to assure its implementation and ensure the policy made available to all stakeholders.

#### 10.4. **Teachers have the following responsibilities:**

- To ensure that they, or anyone working in their classroom to deliver/support PSHE, is doing so in line with the school's PSHE policy, curriculum and other relevant school policies;
- Delivering PSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to PSHE/RSE
- To contribute to the evaluation of the programme;
- To assess student's progress against the agreed learning outcomes;
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Monitoring progress
- To communicate with parents when appropriate/necessary.

### **11. Working with Parents/Carers**

We recognise that parents/carers are key partners in our delivery of a comprehensive PSHE and RSE programme for our students at the school. The PSHE and RSE curriculum we deliver is designed to support the important role of parents in this area.

For secondary age students parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child/young person turns 16. After this point, if the child/young person wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from RSE and they will join another class group of a similar age and ability where possible.

Parents can view the materials used in school and discuss the content of the RSE programme with school staff or the PSHE Subject Lead. Where a personalised intervention programme is required for individual student's parents will be informed and content/resources/materials will be shared upon their request.

## **12. Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of PSHE and RSE. It is included in our continuing professional development calendar. The Subject Lead will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE, with agreement from the headteacher.

## **13. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Leadership team alongside PSHE Subject Lead through; planning scrutiny, curriculum quality assurance processes, summative data and evidence recorded on Evidence for Learning.

Students' development in PSHE and RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

The Senior Leadership Team and Extended Leadership Team will support colleagues in the teaching of PSHE and RSE by giving information about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in school.

All staff will be responsible for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicating areas for further improvement.

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE subject lead annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

## **14. Confidentiality and Safeguarding**

Although PSHE and RSE is not about personal disclosures and personal issues, it is possible that a student may disclose personal information or there may be times when a pupil wishes to confide in a member of staff. Staff understand that they cannot promise students absolute confidentiality, and students need to be aware that school staff cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality.

We recognise that because effective RSE may alert children to what is appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour, there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made.

All Mary Elliot Academy staff will ensure all safeguarding issues will be referred to a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and follow the school's

safeguarding and child protection procedures. If a student discloses to a teacher that they are sexually active, or are considering sexual activity, then this would be viewed as a safeguarding issue.

Please refer to Mary Elliot Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for further information.

## 15. Ethnic and Cultural Groups

Our PSHE and RSE work responds to the needs of individual students and takes students faiths, and cultures into consideration. We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups and we will respond to parental and/or students queries in order to allay any concerns that may exist about the RSE curriculum.

## 16. Equal Opportunities

All of the students are given the opportunity to take part in the Relationships Education or RSE programme regardless of their 'age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil-partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics)'. Section 28. RSE and Health Education Statutory Guidance 2019.

Every effort is made to ensure that self-esteem and respect are fostered in staff, students and their families.

## 17. Changes

| Description                        | Date           | Page | Section |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------|---------|
| Amended Policy and Curriculum Aims | September 2025 | 3    | 1       |
| Updated Curriculum Intent          | September 2025 | 5    | 5       |
| Updated – Delivery of PSHE/RSE     | September 2025 | 5    | 6       |