

Learning for Life!



Headteacher: **Ms Annemari Ottridge** M.Ed. NPQH NPQEL

Dear Parents and Carers,

We believe that promoting the health and wellbeing of our pupils is an important part of their overall education. We do this through our personal, social, health and emotional (PSHE) curriculum. PSHE covers many topics including all kinds of relationships, physical/emotional health and the skills needed to live in the wider world. The aim of our PSHE curriculum is to help pupils make safe and informed decisions during their school years and beyond.

Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) is the statutory element of our PSHE curriculum and all schools in England are required to teach RSHE to secondary-aged pupils. We will be teaching lessons about RSHE as part of our weekly timetabled PSHE lessons and overleaf you can see the topics that will be delivered this academic year. During these lessons, pupils will be able to ask questions, which will be answered factually in an age-appropriate manner. Lessons are underpinned by an agreed set of ground rules that you can also find attached to this letter.

RSHE is a statutory subject and although parents can withdraw their child from the sex education element, we want to assure parents that our curriculum is taught in an age-appropriate manner and provides pupils with the time to ask questions in a safe environment and ultimately receive factual information, rather than hearing content second hand or via online platforms. RSE content is always taught with a focus on the relationship aspect, rather than the sexual element which makes up very little of our overall PSHE curriculum. In the 21st century pupils are exposed to so many of the incorrect messages about their bodies, relationships and expectations. The prevalence of sexual images in social and other media make it important that all young people have a place to discuss pressures, check facts, dispel myths and ultimately feel safe.

RSHE is a carefully planned curriculum and is there to ensure our pupils can navigate the world around them safely. An un-informed child is often a child left vulnerable and we want to empower our pupils here at Lonsdale School.

You may find that your child starts asking questions about the topic at home, or you might want to take the opportunity to talk to your child about issues before the work is covered in school. If you have any queries about the content of the programme or resources used, please do not hesitate in contacting me via email ssmall@lonsdale.herts.sch.uk. Examples of teaching plans, resources and other materials used are available for you to browse through should you so wish.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Small
Assistant Headteacher

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Frequently asked questions

What are the aims of RHE/RSHE in our school?

Depending on the age of the children and the lessons in their particular year group, we want RSHE to:

- *develop the confidence to talk, listen and think about feelings and relationships*
- *develop friendship/relationship skills*
- *develop positive attitudes, values and self-esteem*
- *provide knowledge and understanding about puberty and the changes that will take place*
- *provide knowledge and understanding about reproduction and sexuality*
- *address concerns and correct misunderstanding that children may have gained from the media and peers*
- *develop skills to help children protect themselves against unwanted sexual experience*
- *empower pupils to understand their bodies are amazing and they have a right to talk about keeping safe and consent in a manner of situations not just those linked to sexual intimacy*
- *know where and how to seek help*
- *to empower children with the confidence to talk about their bodies and their feelings.*

What are the different topics in the RSHE curriculum at secondary school?

- *Families and people who care for me*
- *Respectful relationships, including friendships*
- *Online and media*
- *Being safe*
- *Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health*
- *Internet safety and harms*
- *Mental well-being*
- *Physical health and fitness*
- *Healthy eating*
- *Drugs, alcohol, tobacco*
- *Health and prevention*
- *Basic first aid*
- *Changing adolescent body*

For further information on each strand of the topics visit 'Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education' at www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

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Can you explain the school's RSHE morals and values framework?

RSHE follows the school's agreed aims, values and moral framework which is sensitive to the needs and beliefs of pupils, parents, carers and other members of the school community. RSHE will be delivered within the school's agreed policy and in line with the Equality Act 2010; our teaching will be inclusive.

RSHE will support the importance of marriage or stable relationships for family life and bringing up children. Care is taken to ensure children are not stigmatized according to their different home circumstances and all families will be discussed as part of a diverse community.

Families sometimes look different from a child's own family; children need to understand that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

Pupils will be encouraged to understand that thinking about morals and values also includes:

- *respect for ourselves and others*
- *commitment, trust and love within relationships*
- *an understanding of diversity in relation to religion, culture and sexual orientation*
- *an honesty with ourselves and others*
- *self-awareness*
- *exploration of our rights, duties and responsibilities.*

Misunderstandings about RSHE

Schools have an important role to play in RSHE.

There is sometimes concern that RSE in school might promote sexual activity or cause confusion about an individual's sexuality. The research on quality RSE points to a more positive outlook: 87 programmes from many countries were examined by UNESCO in 2009. This led to the conclusion that if RSE has an effect it is a positive one: *'sexuality education can lead to later and more responsible sexual behaviour or may have no discernible impact on sexual behaviour'*.

Secretary of State Foreword 2020:

'Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way'.

(See www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education)

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PSHE Long-term Plan 2023 – 2024

	Key stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key Stage 5
Half term 1	My Health and Me Good mental health and emotional wellbeing Living a healthy lifestyle Personal attributes	My Health and Me Positive and negative effects on mental health Staying physically healthy Self-concept	My Health and Me Mental health and emotional wellbeing Healthy Lifestyles Self-Concept
Half term 2	Physical and emotional changes Puberty and sexual health	Maintaining Good Sexual Health Sexual health services STIs Fertility Pregnancy	Staying Safe Managing risk and personal safety Sexual health
Half term 3	Feel Good Relationships Features of positive and negative relationships Respectful relationships	Feel Good Relationships The importance of a strong, positive relationship before intimacy Relationship values	Feel Good Relationships Forming and maintaining respectful relationships
Half term 4	Rights, responsibilities and the law Employment rights Equality Financial risk Introduction to consent	Rights, responsibilities, risk and the law Employment rights and responsibilities Financial choices Managing risk and personal safety	Rights, responsibilities, risk and the law Employment rights and responsibilities Media literacy and digital resilience
Half term 5	Relationships: Expect Respect Consent Respectful relationships Bullying, abuse and discrimination	Relationships: Expect Respect Consent Remaining respectful within relationships Abusive behaviour	Relationships: Expect Respect Consent Bullying, abuse and discrimination
Half term 6	Money Matters Managing finances	Money Matters Managing finances	Money Matters Managing finances

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PSHE Ground Rules

PSHE education covers many complex issues which have the potential to be sensitive for some pupils. That's why it's so important to create and maintain a safe learning environment for all lessons where there is a climate of trust, cooperation and support. Clear ground rules that are understood and adhered to help to achieve this.

A safe learning environment enables pupils to share feelings, explore values and attitudes, express opinions and consider those of others without attracting negative feedback. As well as encouraging more open discussion, it also helps to make sure that teachers are not anxious about unexpected disclosures or comments.

>> Openness

We will be open and honest, but not discuss directly our own or others' personal/private lives. We will discuss general situations as examples but will not use names or descriptions which could identify anyone. We will not put anyone 'on the spot'.

>> Keep the conversation in the room

We feel safe discussing general issues relating to mental health within this space, and we know that our teacher will not repeat what is said in the classroom unless they are concerned we are at risk, in which case they will follow the school's safeguarding policy.

>> Non-judgmental approach

It is okay for us to disagree with another person's point of view but we will not judge, make fun of, or put anybody down. We will 'challenge the opinion, not the person'.

>> Right to pass

Taking part is important. However, we have the right to pass on answering a question or participating in an activity.

>> Make no assumptions

We will not make assumptions about people's values, attitudes, behaviours, life experiences or feelings.

>> Listen to others

We will listen to the other person's point of view and expect to be listened to.

>> Using language

We will use the correct terms for the things we will be discussing rather than the slang terms, as they can be offensive. If we are not sure what the correct term is, we will ask our teacher.

>> Asking questions

We know that there are no stupid questions. We do not ask questions to deliberately try to embarrass anyone else. There is a question box for anonymous questions.

>> Seeking help and advice

If we need further help or advice, we know how and where to seek it confidentially, both in school and in the community. We will encourage friends to seek help if we think they need it.

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