

Leigh Academy Blackheath



Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy 2025–2026

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This policy integrates updates from the Department for Education’s 2025 RSHE Guidance (statutory from September 2026). It revises and replaces the 2023–25 policy.

1. Rationale and Ethos

This policy outlines our Academy's approach to delivering Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), aligned with the 2025 updated statutory guidance.

The overarching aims and objectives of our Relationship Health and Sex Education is that pupils are able to make safe, healthy and informed decisions for their personal wellbeing both now and in the future.

We are committed to:

- Providing inclusive, age-appropriate and evidence-based RSHE
- Ensuring accessibility for pupils with SEND through collaboration with the SENCO
- Embedding equality, particularly around protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010)
- Fostering gender equality and LGBT+ equality by reflecting the values of modern British Society as set out by modern British law and legislation.
- Promoting the school values of Respect, Integrity, Scholarship, Ambition and Resilience, as well as the IB Learner Profile Attributes.

The intended outcomes of our programme are that students will;

- Know and understand the make up of modern British society;
- Understand the right to express themselves freely without fear of prosecution;
- Have a responsibility towards the wellbeing of others;
- Understand how to stay safe both online and when in the wider world;
- Recognise what makes healthy and happy relationships and friendships;
- Understand how to access support within the academy as well as how to access external agencies for additional support;
- Develop the attributes of resilience and creativity, become confident communicators, show compassion, be open minded, and be responsible citizens who act with integrity, both in the real world and online

Consultation with parents, carers, staff and students is ongoing and will continue as new content is implemented.

2. Definition

RSHE encompasses learning on emotional, social and physical development, relationships, sexuality, health, safeguarding, personal identity, and digital literacy. It is not intended to promote sexual activity but ensures pupils receive factual, medically and legally accurate information.

The 2025 guidance expands RSHE to include:

- Online harms (e.g., image-sharing, pornography, incel/manosphere content, misogyny, extremism)
- Healthy digital engagement and media literacy
- Sexual harassment, coercion and power dynamics
- Mental health literacy, emotional regulation and resilience
- Personal safety in public spaces

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The RHSE programme is led by the Vice Principal in charge of Safeguarding and Inclusion and is taught by trained LAB staff. Many aspects of Relationship Health and Sex Education will be delivered in tutor time by class tutors, and this will be supported by external agencies and expert outside practitioners where appropriate.

The Governing Body

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the Governing Body will take part in the consultation process and approve the final RHSE policy.

The Principal and Vice Principal (Designated Safeguarding and Inclusion lead)

The Principal and Vice Principal (DSL) are responsible for the initial collation of the RHSE policy and overseeing the development of this in discussion with staff, students and parents. They are also responsible for overseeing the delivery of the RHSE curriculum, and ensuring it is taught consistently across the Academy such that it meets the needs of all students. The Principal and Vice Principal (DSL) are also responsible for ensuring all staff have access to the necessary training and support in order to effectively deliver the RHSE content through staff CPD.

Coordinator of Personal Development

The Coordinator of Personal Development is responsible for the development of the RHSE curriculum, as well as monitoring that it is taught consistently across the Academy and is meeting the needs of all students. The Coordinator of Personal Development is also responsible for ensuring appropriate training is accessed by Teachers, tutors and support staff, and liaising with the Principal and Vice Principal (DSL) regarding any curriculum changes and additions.

SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for liaising with the The Coordinator of Personal Development and Tutors where required, to ensure students with SEN or any additional needs have full access to the RHSE curriculum and delivery, and any barriers to learning are removed where possible. Lessons and units of work are designed to be inclusive and to direct students towards additional support where this may be required, in accordance with the Equality Act

2010 and Schools (May 2014) and the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RHSE) and Health Education', whereby schools must 'make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects'.

All Staff (including Tutors and support staff)

Staff are responsible for the Delivery of RHSE Tutorials. They are trained in how to facilitate sensitive discussions and are expected to model positive attitudes towards RHSE. In addition to this, they should provide quality first teaching of RHSE, which is inclusive teaching of all pupils in the class. Staff are also expected to follow the Academies safeguarding policies when required and engage fully with training and CPD opportunities to support with RHSE delivery. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RHSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RHSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal and Vice Principal (DSL). Staff will take part in the consultation process. Relevant factual and scientific aspects of RSE will be delivered through the science curriculum. Other aspects will be taught within the PHE curriculum and where appropriate, elements of the law and ethics of RSE will be delivered in RE lessons.

Students

Students are expected to fully engage in the RHSE curriculum provided. Students are aware of the need to treat others with respect and sensitivity. **Students took part in the consultation process led by the LAB Student Government.**

Training

Annual training includes:

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Digital harms, online misogyny, and harmful content
- Consent, healthy relationships, power dynamics
- Mental health awareness and signposting
- Extremism and radicalisation risks

4. Curriculum Design

Our RSHE curriculum:

- Aligns with the 2025 statutory guidance
- Follows a spiral, age-appropriate structure
- Integrates PSHE Association materials, Unifrog material and evidence-based practice
- Includes digital safeguarding, online influence, misogyny awareness, respectful relationships, mental health, consent and modern risks
- Challenges stereotypes and promotes equality

- Builds resilience, decision-making skills and personal agency

Key Curriculum Enhancements (2025 update):

- Online Safety & Digital Consent
- Misogyny & Gender-based Harms
- Sexual Harassment & Harmful Behaviour
- Consent
- Mental Health
- Inclusive Relationships

5. Legislation

We are required to teach relationships education known as RHSE as part of our statutory curriculum. Current regulations and guidance from the Department for Education state that from September 2020, all schools must deliver relationships and sex education. The parental right to withdraw pupils from RHSE remains in both primary and secondary education, for aspects of sex education which are not part of the Science curriculum

The RHSE policy complements the following policies;

- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Carers Policy

Complies with:

- Education Act (1996)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Revised DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance (2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

6. Safe and Effective Practice

Includes:

- Ground rules for discussions
- Confidentiality boundaries
- Protocols for reporting digital abuse and harassment

7. Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RHSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Where this occurs, teachers will consult with the appropriate member of the academy Safeguarding Team, and follow procedures as stated on the Academy Child Protection Policy which can be found on the Academy website. Visitors and external agencies who support the delivery of RHSE will be required to present DBS checks and will be required to read our Academy Child Protection Policy.

The following safeguarding guidelines will be shared with staff during their training at the beginning of the academic year and staff will be reminded of the below at regular intervals;

- We will allow students to raise anonymous questions through the creation of safe boxes around the academy or the safe@leighacademyblackheath.org.uk email. These are checked daily by Student Services Managers in each college team. These questions will be answered by the SSM or members or DSLs and information shared in subsequent sessions.
- If a safeguarding issue is raised by an anonymous question we will address the solutions to the question in the next session in a manner appropriate to the age group of students. Should this not be possible then the DSL will advise the appropriate next steps.
- If a question raised in class is too explicit, feels too mature for a student to ask, is inappropriate for the whole class or raises concerns about sexual exploitation, the teacher should acknowledge the question and promise to respond to it with the student at a later time. It is crucial that this takes place at the next appropriate opportunity with the student and with support of another member of staff if appropriate.
- If a teacher is concerned that a student may be at risk of sexual exploitation or abuse they should follow the academy Child Protection Policy and report this using appropriate channels.

New expectations include recognising:

- Harmful online communities
- Online Safety, including misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories
- Gender-based harassment
- Coercive behaviour
- Digital abuse and AI-generated explicit imagery

8. Communicating with Parents

Parents and carers will be informed about the policy by mail with a link to the RHSE curriculum plan. The policy is also available to parents through the Academy website and can be viewed here. Parents can request to view the curriculum overview and can also request to view the resources, discuss any aspects of the curriculum and the lessons with the relevant SLT members leading on the Co-curriculum and Personal Development across LAB, in the first instance. We work closely with parents to ensure that they are fully aware of what is being taught and provide additional resources and support through the Academy website, which notifies parents when Relationships Health and Sex education will be taught.

Parent Right to Withdraw

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RHSE, but not Relationships or Health Education. Please refer to the Government guidelines for further information regarding the right to withdraw using the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RHSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing and addressed to the relevant Head of College. Heads of College will discuss requests with parents and take appropriate action.

9. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Evaluation through:

- Staff feedback
- Student surveys
- Curriculum audits
- Governor oversight
- Safeguarding trend analysis

10. Appendix

Appendix materials will be updated to reflect the 2025 statutory framework.