



Relationships and Sex Education and PSHE Policy 2025-26

Aims:

Leigh Academy Mascalls is committed to ensuring that all of our students are given the knowledge and skill-set to make informed and responsible decisions as a member of modern democratic British society. This will enable them to form positive relationships, achieve success and live a healthy life. Students are also taught about the risks faced in an increasingly online world and how to mitigate them. Leigh Academy Mascalls provides all students with high quality Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

Outcomes

Through the PSHE and RSE curriculum at Leigh Academy Mascalls, students will:

- Develop respect and good, positive relationships with their peers and the wider community
- Understand the features of healthy and safe relationships
- Understand the importance of health and hygiene
- Use the correct terminology to describe themselves and their bodies
- Be prepared for the emotional and physical changes and challenges of puberty and sexual development
- Develop their sense of self-confidence and self-esteem to make balanced and informed decisions about their own lives
- Be aware of how to stay safe in the real and online worlds
- Be positive and active members of a democratic society
- Be able to listen to and discuss with a range of different opinions

Statutory Requirements:

All secondary schools must deliver Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), as set out in the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) and following the [Government Statutory Guidance](#). Schools must also follow the guidance issued by [the Secretary of State for Education](#) and [Section 403 of the Education Act 1996](#).

Definition of PSHE and RSE:

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) aims to give students the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to lead confident, healthy and independent lives. It aims to help them understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of adolescence and moving towards adulthood. The themes covered in PSHE are:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent bodies

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) focuses on the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils. RSE involves studying a combination of factual information and exploring issues and values in an age appropriate manner. RSE does not promote sexual activity or any particular relationship choice. The themes covered in RSE are:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Roles and responsibilities:

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that PSHE and RSE at Leigh Academy Mascalls meet the statutory requirements.

Assistant Principal for Personal Development

A member of the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the provision of PSHE and RSE at Leigh Academy Mascalls in taught lessons and the wider curriculum.

Teaching Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering PSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to PSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in PSHE and, when discussing issues related to PSHE and RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Curriculum and Delivery:

The PSHE and RSE curriculum is adapted to suit the needs of our pupils. The Assistant Principal for Personal Development and the Designated Safeguarding Lead work to ensure that our programme is responsive to any emerging needs for students. Leigh Academy Mascalls is also working with Pol Ed, a platform supported by Kent Police. Leigh Academy Mascalls has previously worked alongside Life Lessons, an online PSHE platform which shares best practice for PSHE and RSE delivery.

Our delivery for PSHE and RSE is:

- In Key Stage 3 all students have 1 hour a fortnight titled 'Healthy Minds'
- In Key Stage 4 all students have 1 hour a fortnight for PSHE and 1 hour a fortnight for RE
- In Key Stage 5 all students have 1 hour a fortnight for Careers and Personal Development
- All year groups have 2 30 minute Advisory sessions a week, which are focused on PSHE and RSE topics
- Advisory sessions on Fridays cover Current Affairs, allowing students to engage with key developments in the society and wider world around them
- Weekly college assemblies
- Year group assemblies when appropriate to discuss an issue in an age appropriate manner
- Assemblies and talks with trained professionals from outside agencies to enrich our offer
- Our wider school curriculum provides students with the ability to develop their PSHE and RSE knowledge
- Our curriculum is inclusive of all pupils with Protected Characteristics and Fundamental British Values promoted

Pupil Voice and answering pupil questions

Leigh Academy Mascalls believes that pupil voice is central to ensuring that the PSHE and RSE curriculum is appropriate and effective. We employ different methods to ensure that students can express their views on the topics and issues studied, including formally meeting student leadership and completing student surveys. Students are also supported in learning how to listen to evidence and alternative opinions, reflect on their own context and perspectives and think about the wider global context of the issue. Views that are hurtful, offensive or exclusionary are addressed, in line with expectations in modern British society and law. Our goal is to promote a culture where British Values of democracy, rule of law, human rights, inclusion and diversity are promoted and celebrated.

PSHE and RSE sessions explore a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves and others. Where possible, answers will be given to the whole group to ensure that all can benefit from the answer. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question

outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way.

School staff will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their students that could make either party vulnerable. We believe that an open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older students. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in RSE. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm and abuse when they are able to discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

Pupil voice is also used as part of the monitoring process for PSHE and RSE, to enable students to express their views on the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Parental Right to Withdrawal

Both relationships education and sex education is compulsory for all secondary school pupils. Parents cannot withdraw their child from sex education taught through the curriculum in Science. Parents can ask to withdraw their child from parts or all of sex education taught as part of relationships and sex education (RSE). Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory and/or non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the Academy will arrange this. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to Miss Honey, Assistant Principal, who will then discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. A copy of any withdrawal request will be placed in the pupil's educational record and alternative work will be provided for students who are withdrawn.

Review Date:
September 2026