



# The Wilnecote School

## Title: Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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### 1. Introduction and Statutory Requirements

This policy covers The Wilnecote School’s whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our students. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

The Wilnecote School believes that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSE. We believe that through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.

This policy was produced in consultation with our staff, board of governors, students and parents. We will ensure the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents, including through publishing the policy on our school website.

The information below complies with our statutory obligations to deliver RSE under sections 34 & 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to the ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education’ 2020 statutory guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996

The preparation, delivery and evaluation of our RSE offer includes consultation with our staff, board of governors, pupils and parents across each academic year. We will review this policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme continues to meet the needs of our students.

### 2. Equality statement

We believe that RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice.

Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum.

We are also committed to an RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to

them. This means we are committed to an LGBT+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE.

An inclusive RSE at The Wilnecote School will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between students and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

### 3. Policy Development

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

1. Review - the school identified key individuals who have reviewed all relevant information, including relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation - all teaching and support staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation - parents and any interested parties were invited to respond to a questionnaire on the draft policy (including free-text option) and were offered the opportunity for one-to-one dialogue on issues arising from it.
4. Pupil consultation - we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE through small group meetings with the Assistant Headteacher - Personal Development
5. Ratification - once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

### 4. Definition of RSE

We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health. We take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way and using a gender equity and human rights framework. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other. (This definition in line with the model definition created by the Sex Education Forum.)

To cover the curriculum content outlined in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our students to build positive and respectful relationships both online and offline. We seek to ensure that it gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- realise their health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal and sexual identity and the personal/sexual identities of others
- understand a wide variety of family structures, committed relationships and the legal status of different types of long-term relationships
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens

- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

We believe that high quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Evidence shows that effective RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

## 5. RSE programme

The RSE programme is led by Mrs. S Ager, the Assistant Headteacher - Personal Development.

The programme is taught by qualified teachers in their role as form tutor. This will take place predominantly in tutor time sessions and will be both supported and enhanced with the delivery of specific areas by external providers, for example the School Nurses team.

The content of our school's programme is based on the National Curriculum Science Programme of Study and the statutory DfE guidance for PSHE/Relationships and Sex Education. In line with this Page 5 guidance, the school recognises that RSE must be taught at both Key Stages 3 and 4 and indeed, RSE appears in the PSHE programme (known as The Wilnecote Way) across all five year groups. Parents wishing to see the RSE programme and the materials used and/or the PSHE scheme of work may do so by contacting the Assistant Headteacher, Personal Development. Parents will be informed when 'Sex Education' is going to be delivered in school to their child via the Wilnecote App, with an invitation to support the work being done in school by discussing issues at home. All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils, including those pupils with SEND.

Under DfE Statutory guidance 'Relationships and Sex Education' (2019) "parents have the right for their child to be excused from sex education within RSE only". Please see the withdrawal section of this policy for more detail.

## 6. Delivery of RSE

The effective delivery of RSE in schools is recognised as a key factor supporting the development of young people and it is our intention that RSE is delivered professionally and with sensitivity at all times. It is taught as part of a wider programme known as The Wilnecote Way which includes: personal, social and health education (PSHE); British Values; spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) and careers education.

Delivery of The Wilnecote Way for Key Stage 3 is predominantly through scheduled tutor time sessions by form tutors who are also qualified teachers. At Key Stage 4 there are discrete PSHE lessons which are taught by trained teachers. The Wilnecote Way is delivered across all key stages, using a spiral curriculum approach. There will also be delivery of specific areas by external sources for example, school nurses. Teachers will use a range of methods and resources to teach RSE with lots of opportunity for students to take part in discussions and ask questions.

The Assistant Headteacher, Personal Development will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas (science, computing and PE) to ensure a holistic and joined up approach to what is taught in RSE. We also supplement learning through using a whole school approach and utilising time outside of the classroom, for example exploring topics in school assemblies, through art and drama, school celebrations or events. RSE will address aspects of relationships and sex in an integrated way within a single topic. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. We also use external agencies where appropriate to deliver aspects of Relationships and Sex Education (see section below). The programme will be delivered in a non-judgmental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (for example when teaching about external

body parts). School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when teaching RSE.

All staff who have responsibility for delivering RSE will undergo training to ensure they are up-to-date with the RSE policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSE. In addition to ongoing training, CPD will also be scheduled in response to updates to our RSE scheme of work and any new development in terms of course content.

## 7. Monitoring

Our whole school quality assurance programme includes the monitoring of The Wilnecote Way and all curriculum subjects, to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, that the RSE curriculum is meeting the new national requirements under the Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education guidance, and that learning outcomes are reflective of student need. This policy will be reviewed by the school's leadership team and Governors on a regular basis. If changes are needed, members of staff, parents/carers and students will be consulted and any subsequent changes made clearly communicated.

The Wilnecote School has the same high standards and expectations of the quality of work produced by students in The Wilnecote Way lessons as for all other curriculum areas.

The quality assurance cycle monitors the implementation of the programme and quality of student work through:

- Lesson observations
- Looking at samples of pupils' work
- Analysing pupil attendance in lessons
- Pupil and staff evaluations of any RSE delivery from external providers
- Student voice

## 8. Answering student questions

The Wilnecote Way and RSE explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from students. We view questions as a positive sign that students are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others. As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. 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 and take into account whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons.

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.

## 9. Communicating with parents and carers

We believe that the successful teaching of RSE involves parents/ carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/ carers can play an important role in the RSE of their

children through exploring discussions at home that have taken place in school. Students are likely to ask questions at home that emerge as a result of the lessons they complete.

Communication with parents and carers is key to maintaining the strong relationships we have and are a strength in our role as a community school. Our commitment to keeping parents informed and included in the area of RSE will continue to be through a range of methods including but not limited to:

- Surveys and questionnaires
- The opportunity to be part of a working party
- Parent's evenings
- Welcome packs
- Wilnecote App messages
- Social media updates

If parents/carers have any concerns or special circumstances the school should be aware of, or would like any further information about the curriculum, please contact the school who will direct your query to the relevant person.

## 10. Safeguarding

The Wilnecote School acknowledges that RSE is crucial in contributing to a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

RSE helps students to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to know how to get help if they are experiencing abuse, or have experienced, abuse.

We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some students could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures. We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.

All students and staff are aware of who the designated safeguarding leaders are in the school and know that they can bring any disclosure to them. They have a visual reminder in classrooms of who these members of staff are too.

## 11. Parental right to withdraw from RSE

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE. Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education.

All children will have the right to opt into sex education three terms before they turn 16 and the school will make arrangements for this to happen. In practice, this means that when a child turns 15 they have the right to be taught sex education if they want to.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.

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 the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum. Except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

## 12. Appendix

### What the Law Says

Consent to medical treatment and The Fraser Guidelines.

Adults, defined as people over the age of 18, are usually regarded as competent to decide their own treatment. The Family Law Reform Act 1969 also gives the right to consent to treatment to anyone aged 16 to 18.

Young people under the age of 16 can consent to medical treatment if they have sufficient maturity and judgement to enable them fully to understand what is proposed. This was clarified in England and Wales by the House of Lords in the 1985 Gillick case.

Although it is an offence to have sex with someone under the age of 16 it is lawful for doctors to provide contraceptive advice and treatment without parental consent providing certain criteria are met. These criteria are known as the Fraser Guidelines.

The Fraser Guidelines

In 1985, Lord Fraser said in judgment of the Gillick case, that a professional can give contraceptive advice or treatment to a person under 16 without parental consent providing the professional is satisfied that:

- the young person will understand the professional's advice;
- the young person cannot be persuaded to tell his or her parents or allow the doctor to tell them they are seeking contraceptive advice.
- the young person is likely to begin, or to continue having, sexual intercourse with or without contraceptive treatment;
- the young person's physical or mental health, or both, are likely to suffer unless she or he receives contraceptive advice or treatment;
- the young person's best interests require them to receive contraceptive advice or treatment with or without parental consent