

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

2026-2027

Reviewed by A Meisner and T Taylor: 24 August 2026

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Next review: May 2027

1 Introduction

Students at MPW are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly both online 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 personal and social lives in a positive way. RSHE is not about encouraging young people to become sexually active, nor is it about promoting any particular lifestyle or relationship choice. Our RSHE curriculum aims to empower our students to understand their bodies and emotions, to reflect on their relationship values and to be able to openly discuss relationships, sex and sexual health.

The topics covered within the RSHE curriculum are wide-ranging and, at times, there may be understandable and legitimate areas of contention. This policy is designed to outline the purpose and content of RSHE, whilst ensuring that all the compulsory subject content is age appropriate and differentiated to the needs of our students.

The curriculum will build on the knowledge already acquired and develop further students' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex. Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. Our RSHE curriculum aims to give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

All this content supports the wider work at MPW in helping to foster student wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we believe are fundamental to students being happy, successful and productive members of society. The content will be delivered within our wider programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education. As such, this policy document should be read alongside our PSHE Policy and PSHE Curriculum documents.

2 Definition of “RSHE”

For the purposes of this policy, “Relationships, Sex and Health Education” is defined as teaching students about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships and to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing.

3 Statutory Requirements

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is compulsory for all students receiving secondary education under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) also remains compulsory in independent schools and provides the wider curriculum framework through which much of the college's RSHE provision is delivered. This policy has been developed with regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance on RSHE, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2026), the Equality Act 2010 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

RSHE supports compliance with the Independent School Standards by contributing to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It helps students build self-knowledge, confidence and personal responsibility; understand healthy and respectful relationships; respect others, including those with protected characteristics; and prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

Governors and senior members of staff will:

- Review this policy annually and develop it in the light of changing statutory guidance and legislation and feedback from other stakeholders, namely parents (including guardians and carers), students and staff, to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole college community.
- Ensure that staff have regular training on RSHE content and how to deliver lessons on it.
- Ensure that Sex Education is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups.
- Ensure that parents are aware of the college's RSHE policy and curriculum, and that any views or concerns they have will be listened to, considered and appropriately acted on.

Staff who are delivering RSHE will:

- Ensure that they are familiar with the current version of the college's RSHE policy and the latest curriculum requirements in this area.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around RSHE provision.
- Foster a positive environment in which students feel they can engage in an open dialogue on RSHE matters.
- Provide regular feedback to Toby Taylor (Head of PSHE) on their experience of teaching RSHE and the students' response.
- Provide regular feedback to Jon Slay (Deputy Principal Pastoral and Safeguarding) and Ann Meisner (Principal) on the experience of teaching RSHE and the students' response.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not detract from providing a balanced RSHE curriculum.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all students in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

5 RSHE Policy and Curriculum Development and Review

We understand that parental support is integral to the success of our RSHE curriculum. While we have an educational and legal obligation to provide young people with Relationships, Sex and Health Education, we respect the primary role of parents, including guardians and carers, in educating children about these matters. All parents are given an opportunity to view the policy and curriculum via email and make recommendations for changes during the first term of the academic year. There is also a parental consultation meeting in the first half of the first term where the policy and curriculum may be discussed. Further, parents are very welcome to explore our RSHE curriculum by requesting to view the scheme of work and teaching materials. Staff members can contact Toby Taylor directly or through their line manager with their thoughts. Student opinion will be sought through feedback conducted in every PSHE lesson for those in GCSE and Lower Sixth, as well as through weekly emails on PSHE. Additionally, student opinions will be sought via the Student Council; students may also contact their PT, email the DSL or use the online reporting tool on an individual basis.

This policy and the RSHE curriculum reflect our college's context as well as recognise that the role of educating students on these topics is a partnership between home and college. We aim to always deliver content in a sensitive, objective and balanced manner to enable students to comprehend the range of social attitudes and behaviour in modern-day society. This will empower them to consider their own attitudes and actions and make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions while they are at college, at home and in adult life.

6 RSHE Curriculum Overview

The RSHE curriculum is part of the whole college PSHE curriculum, which is planned and designed to be age appropriate, under the following themes:

- Relationships, Respect and Consent
- Families and Caring Relationships
- Emotional and Physical Wellbeing
- Personal Safety and Risk Management
- Online Life, Media and Digital Citizenship
- Identity, Equality and Inclusion
- Sexual Health and Healthy Intimate Relationships
- Rights, Responsibilities and the Law
- Decision-Making, Character and Preparation for Adult Life

The PSHE Schemes of Work provide more detail on how the college teaches these topics. They are available on the Teams or the Digital Hub. A summary of the content is provided in Appendix A. The RSHE topics fall under all of these themes and are taught within the PSHE curriculum but may also be covered across the curriculum in subjects such as science.

7 Curriculum Delivery

For all years, the RSHE curriculum will be taught as part of the PSHE curriculum. For students in Years 10, 11 and 12, the PSHE curriculum consists of weekly timetabled lessons. Lessons are compulsory for all students and attendance is registered. Year 13 and 14 students will have PSHE material delivered as part of two drop-down days during the academic year. All students will receive emails on PSHE throughout the year that include signposting to external support, as well as questions for reflection which can be discussed with their PTs.

The curriculum is delivered by a team of tutors, as well as by visiting speakers and visitors from external agencies. We believe that external speakers can usefully supplement learning and provide different perspectives. We ensure the input from external agencies and contributors is part of a planned programme which consolidates and grows prior learning. All visitors follow the Safeguarding policies in place when visiting MPW. Classes or groups are always supervised by a member of the teaching staff.

PSHE and RSHE are taught through a range of interactive and evidence-informed approaches that develop both knowledge and the ability to apply learning in real-life situations. These include:

- Structured discussion and respectful dialogue
- Critical thinking and reasoned debate
- Scenario-based learning and decision-making activities
- Case study analysis and problem-solving tasks
- Collaborative learning and group investigation
- Role play and exploration of real-world situations
- Reflection, self-assessment and personal target-setting
- Media literacy and evaluation of online content
- Risk recognition and risk-management activities
- Student consultation and learner voice activities
- Retrieval practice and knowledge consolidation
- Formative and summative assessment opportunities

The curriculum is designed not only to develop knowledge and understanding, but also to strengthen students' ability to exercise judgement, manage risk, think critically, make informed decisions and build healthy, respectful relationships throughout their lives.

8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity

MPW will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and thereby ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against students with respect to the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Further to the above, our RSHE Curriculum will:

- Ensure that BAME, LGBTQ+ and people with disabilities are positively represented;
- Provide students with a safe environment to learn about sexual orientation and gender identity, reinforcing the importance of mutual respect and tackling LGBTQ+ misconceptions, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia and gender stereotypes; and
- Teach the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment. The college will present information objectively and in a balanced manner, enabling students to understand the law, respect differences and develop informed views. Teaching will be sensitive to the backgrounds, beliefs and experiences of students while ensuring that all statutory content is delivered.

9 Safeguarding and Confidentiality

MPW provides a safe and supportive environment in which all students are made to feel comfortable seeking help on any matter of concern to them. All staff receive annual safeguarding training and sign a declaration to confirm they have read the college's Safeguarding Policy. Confidentiality is a subject covered in both.

The college recognises that harmful sexual behaviour, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, online exploitation and technology-facilitated abuse may affect students both inside and outside the college environment. RSHE forms part of the college's wider preventative safeguarding curriculum and supports students in recognising abuse, understanding healthy relationships and seeking help where concerns arise.

Students may approach an RSHE tutor or another member of staff to discuss sensitive or personal matters arising from RSHE lessons. Staff should respond calmly and sensitively, listen carefully, and provide appropriate support. Staff must not promise absolute confidentiality. Students should be reassured that information will be treated with respect and shared only where necessary, on a need-to-know basis, in accordance with the college's Safeguarding Policy, confidentiality expectations and data protection requirements. Where a disclosure raises a safeguarding or child protection concern, staff must refer the matter to the DSL, Jon Slay, without delay, and information may need to be shared with appropriate staff or external agencies to protect the student or others from harm.

If a member of staff is approached by a student under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, they should:

- Decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the member of staff is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved.
- Remind them that the legal age of consent is 16.
- Encourage the student to talk to their parent(s). Although students may feel that they are more comfortable discussing these matters with a trusted member of staff, it is important that (and important that our students know that) children and their parents have an open and trusting relationship as regards sex and sexual health.
- Ensure that the student is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active.

Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the DSL to decide what is in the best interests of the student.

10 Advice and Treatment

Staff who are approached by students with concerns regarding sexual health should provide appropriate support and encourage access to qualified medical advice. Where there is a safeguarding concern, staff must follow the college's safeguarding procedures and seek guidance from the DSL. Students will be signposted to appropriate health professionals and services where necessary.

Advice on contraception and safer sex is a key part of the college's RSHE curriculum. We also encourage parents to engage their child in open discussion about practising safer sex. Members of staff have no right to know a student's HIV or hepatitis status, and no student will be discriminated against because of their status should it become disclosed.

The college's First Aid Policy covers protection for all college members against infection from blood-borne viruses.

11 Right to Withdraw

Parents may request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of RSHE, other than sex education that forms part of the science curriculum. Requests should be made in writing to the Deputy Principal (Pastoral and Safeguarding), Jon Slay (jon.slay@mpw.ac.uk). The college will discuss the request with parents to ensure that their wishes are understood, to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, and to explain the benefits of receiving this education and the possible effects of withdrawal, including the risk of students receiving incomplete or inaccurate information from peers.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the college will respect a parental request to withdraw a student from sex education within RSHE. However, from three terms before the student turns 16, the student may choose to receive sex education and the college will make arrangements for this to happen. Students will be made aware of this right in an age-appropriate way.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education, Health Education or any sex education taught as part of the science curriculum.

12 Complaints

Parents who have complaints or concerns regarding the RSHE curriculum should contact the college and follow the college's Complaints Policy.

13 Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment

The delivery of PSHE, including RSHE across Years 10-14 is monitored by Toby Taylor, PSHE Co-ordinator. As part of the annual review process, the college will consider:

- student voice and feedback;
- parental feedback;
- staff feedback;
- safeguarding trends and concerns;
- emerging local and national safeguarding risks; and
- relevant updates to statutory guidance and legislation.

This information will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and inform future developments.

The PSHE Co-ordinator will monitor the planning, teaching and learning of RSHE provision regularly. Planning will be monitored termly, and observations of teaching will take place in accordance with our college monitoring cycle. Feedback will be given to tutors. The schemes of work and policy will also be reviewed annually.

We solicit comments from students after each topic is completed. All comments will be considered and those that are considered pertinent will inform the development of the college's RSHE policy and curriculum. Such contributions help us ensure that our curriculum is rich with the most up-to-date and contextual information so that we can best help our students to navigate life outside of the college premises.

All students in Years 10-12 attend weekly PSHE lessons. Throughout each lesson, the session leader will continually assess students' existing knowledge and confidence in the areas of:

- health and wellbeing;
- sex and relationships; and
- living in the wider world.

A range of assessment strategies are used within lessons, including questioning and discussion, written exercises, questionnaires and quizzes, and individual reflection. Within PSHE classes, students sit two longer assessments in addition to weekly baseline and retrieval assessments. Each student receives a termly PSHE report which outlines their progress.

This policy will be reviewed by Ann Meisner (Principal) annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the MPW Board.

14 Linked Policies

- Anti-bullying and Cyberbullying Policies
- Complaints Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Promoting Good Behaviour Policy
- PSHE Policy
- PSHE Curriculum
- Safeguarding Policy
- Remote Teaching and Learning Policy

Appendix A: Whole-College PSHE and RSHE Themes (Years 10-14)

Theme	Students Should Know	Students Should Be Able To	Students Should Develop the Judgement To
Families and Caring Relationships	Different family structures, parenting responsibilities, marriage, civil partnerships, family law and support services.	Identify supportive relationships and sources of help.	Recognise healthy and unhealthy family dynamics and seek support appropriately.
Respectful Relationships and Friendships	Characteristics of healthy relationships, boundaries, respect, consent, communication, conflict resolution and equality.	Communicate effectively, resolve disagreements respectfully and maintain healthy relationships.	Evaluate relationship situations and make decisions that promote mutual respect and wellbeing.
Consent, Boundaries and Personal Autonomy	Legal and ethical principles of consent, coercion, manipulation and personal rights.	Recognise, communicate and respect boundaries in different contexts.	Identify situations where consent may be absent, compromised or withdrawn and respond appropriately.
Online Life, Media and Digital Citizenship	Online safety, digital footprints, social media influences, misinformation, data use, AI and online law.	Evaluate online information critically, manage online behaviour responsibly and report concerns.	Make informed choices about online interactions and recognise manipulation, exploitation and misinformation.
Emotional Intelligence and Self-Awareness	Emotions, emotional regulation, empathy, self-awareness and emotional wellbeing.	Reflect on personal thoughts, feelings and behaviour.	Consider how emotions influence decisions, relationships and personal wellbeing.
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing	Mental health, resilience, stress management, coping strategies and support services.	Recognise signs of emotional distress and access support when needed.	Make decisions that protect wellbeing and support others appropriately.
Physical Health and Healthy Lifestyles	Physical wellbeing, sleep, exercise, nutrition and healthy habits.	Evaluate lifestyle choices and their impact on wellbeing.	Balance short-term choices against long-term health outcomes.
Personal Safety, Risk Recognition and Risk Management	Personal safety, safeguarding, exploitation, grooming, coercion, abuse and protective factors.	Identify risks, warning signs and available sources of support.	Assess situations, weigh risks and make informed decisions that reduce potential harm.

Sexual Health and Reproductive Health	Fertility, contraception, STIs, reproductive health, pregnancy and accessing healthcare services.	Access reliable information and appropriate support services.	Make informed and responsible decisions about sexual health and relationships.
Healthy Intimate Relationships	Trust, communication, consent, commitment, respect and responsibility within intimate relationships.	Recognise healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviours.	Evaluate relationship choices and understand how decisions affect wellbeing.
Substance Misuse and Addictive Behaviours	Alcohol, drugs, vaping, addiction and their impact on health and decision-making.	Recognise pressures and access support where needed.	Evaluate risks and understand how substance use may affect choices and personal safety.
Gambling Harms and Financial Risk	Gambling, financial exploitation, debt, risk-taking and consumer awareness.	Assess financial risks and recognise harmful behaviours.	Make informed decisions regarding money, risk and personal responsibility.
Identity, Equality and Inclusion	Diversity, protected characteristics, equality law, discrimination, prejudice and inclusion.	Challenge stereotypes respectfully and promote inclusion.	Consider the impact of attitudes and behaviour on others and wider society.
Bullying, Harassment and Abuse	Different forms of bullying, harassment, sexual violence and coercive control.	Identify harmful behaviour and access appropriate support.	Recognise when intervention, reporting or safeguarding action may be necessary.
Citizenship and Social Responsibility	Rights, responsibilities, democratic values, community engagement and social participation.	Participate positively in communities and civic life.	Consider the wider impact of personal actions on others and society.
Extremism, Radicalisation and Harmful Influences	Radicalisation, extremist ideologies, online recruitment and safeguarding concerns.	Critically evaluate messages and sources of information.	Recognise manipulation, coercion and harmful influences and respond safely.
Employability and Workplace Relationships	Professional conduct, workplace expectations, communication and employment rights.	Build positive professional relationships and communicate appropriately.	Navigate workplace situations responsibly and ethically.
Independent Living and	Life skills, responsibilities, support services, housing,	Access support, manage	Make informed decisions that support successful transition into adulthood.

Preparation for Adult Life	finances and personal wellbeing.	responsibilities and plan effectively.	
The Law	Relevant legal provisions relating to relationships, consent, safeguarding, equality, online behaviour, exploitation, substances and criminal activity.	Apply legal knowledge in realistic contexts.	Understand personal responsibility and the consequences of decisions and actions.