

# PARENTS GUIDE TO THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM AT RIVERS ACADEMY WEST LONDON

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## Curriculum Design

Young people today are growing up in an **increasingly complex world** and living their lives seamlessly 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 academic, personal and social lives positively.

Below you will find an overview of the **Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE)** and the **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)** curriculum and **Religious and Philosophical Education (RPE)**.

The curriculum covers Years 7 to 11, each with a full academic year of lessons, based on three lessons per fortnight (Deep Learning Days for year 11 2023/24).

## How was the curriculum created?

This curriculum is rooted in the (September 2020) statutory guidance for RSHE. The curriculum design has been informed by the work of the [Cre8tive Curriculum](#), [EC resources](#) as well as the [PSHE Association](#) but we have adapted to the needs of our learners at Rivers Academy West London. We regularly review the curriculum based on student, staff and parent voice. We make use of [local public health data](#), work closely with Hounslow School nurses and adapt the curriculum based on events locally and nationally.

## What is PSHE Education?

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is the school subject that deals with real-life issues affecting our children, families and communities. It's concerned with the social, health and economic realities of their lives, experiences and attitudes. It supports pupils to be healthy (mentally and physically); safe (online and offline) and equipped to thrive in their relationships and careers. PSHE education helps all children and young people to achieve their fullest potential.

PSHE education is important for students as it:

- Contributes to physical and mental health and wellbeing, encouraging individual responsibility for health.

- Contributes to the safety and protection of our children and young people, from staying safe online to understanding risks associated with drugs and alcohol.
- Promotes independence, resilience and responsibility — preparing children and young people for future roles as parents, employees and leaders.
- Supports employability by developing the personal and social skills demanded by commerce and industry.
- Supports pupils to be critical consumers of information, and develops the skills to identify misleading news or views on social media and elsewhere.

### **Knowledge organisation**

There are 13 topics in the statutory guidance for secondary schools and these are interleaved through the units and across the year groups. The sequence of units within each year is derived in such a way as to enable pupils to **make connections and links** between topics/units.

The development of each topic, and how all the units relating to that topic build from Years 7 to 13, has been derived from an assessment concerning the age-appropriateness of the content.

The substantive PSHE and RSHE knowledge is designed to be delivered in a sequence that allows for connection-making across the topics. The knowledge becomes **more complex and age-specific** as students progress through the academic year.

All substantive RSHE knowledge to be delivered is taken directly from the RSHE statutory guidance document. Each one of the topics becomes a thread of knowledge building throughout this entire secondary curriculum, although there are clear links across topics, which are highlighted throughout.

To embed the substantive knowledge relating to RSHE, pupils need to reflect on the human experience. Pupils' understanding of the topics will be enhanced through stories and scenario-based considerations and reflections. Their hinterland knowledge will complement the substantive knowledge delivered through teachers sharing examples and stories that relate to the topics.

### **Knowledge selection**

The selection of knowledge in this curriculum is informed by the RSHE Statutory Guidance 2020, the PSHE Association's suggested curriculum and The Gatsby Benchmarks. For clarity, here listed are the RSHE topics from the guidance, from which knowledge and units in this curriculum are derived:

#### **Relationship/Sex Education topics**

- Online and Media
- Being Safe
- Respectful Relationships, including Friendships
- Intimate and Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health

- Families

### **Health topics**

- Healthy Eating
- Health and Prevention
- Mental Wellbeing
- Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco
- Basic First Aid
- Internet Safety and Harms
- Changing Adolescent Body
- Physical Health and Fitness

The curriculum has been designed with a presumption that pupils will have been taught all of the statutory primary content for RSHE. We complete an audit of primary local primary school curriculums each year for our feeder schools and have a good understanding of what students study in year 5 and 6. Where necessary in year 7, lessons have been included that re-cap primary content, to ensure our secondary curriculum can be fully accessed.

### **In summary, PSHE education provides opportunities to learn about :**

- **Relationships:** including developing and maintaining positive relationships and dealing with negative relationships. This may include learning about bullying, consent, how to communicate effectively, inappropriate behaviour in relationships and, at a later stage, topics such as sexual coercion and grooming.
- **Developing independence, resilience and responsibility:** including preparing children and young people to face life's challenges and make the most of life's opportunities.
- **Health:** including healthy lifestyles, healthy eating and exercise; mental and emotional health; drug, alcohol and tobacco education; emergency life-saving skills.
- **Managing risk:** including understanding personal safety and online safety; financial choices and risks; appreciating the value of taking risks in certain situations (e.g. entrepreneurial risks).
- **Economic well being:** including the role of money, influences on our use of money, gambling, careers education
- **Employability skills:** including learning about enterprise, business and finance. Developing the skills and attributes to succeed at work, including communication skills and confidence.

### **Inclusive and ambitious**

Learning within this curriculum is, by law, an entitlement of all children in the UK. By nature of the subject matter, certain elements may resonate with specific pupils more than others, based on their background and life experience.

However, the content is designed to be taught to all pupils on the basis that it aims to build **understanding and appreciation of others** to further strengthen relationships and preparedness for adult life.

Content relating to sex and relationships will be taught in such a way as to be equally applicable to LGBTQ+ young people and those that are not LGBTQ+. It is hoped that in delivering this curriculum, teachers are further embracing and enhancing inclusivity within our community. We have an appointed LGBT inclusion lead who oversees the LGBT inclusion strategy and there is an Equality Club which aims to support all students, including LGBT students, and campaigns on equality issues.

The curriculum breaks down lengthy guidance into deliverable, manageable chunks. It aims to challenge pupils to deeply reflect, and embrace a wide range of subject (and topic) specific vocabulary, to equip them with the tools needed to navigate their lives as teenagers and adults, and to understand experiences that might affect friends, relations, partners and colleagues both now and in the future, thus hopefully making them more empathetic individuals.

**Resilience and character building.** These should include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

### **Respect for Others**

Our Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum is planned with an understanding of the contextual challenges and risks facing our students. We recognise the vital importance of educating our students about **respect for others** and this theme of respect runs throughout our curriculum across a range of issues. We devote additional curriculum time to issues as diverse as **consent, sexual harassment** and **sexual violence**; challenges facing different communities and **staying safe**.

### **A lifelong process**

The curriculum teaches young people to **understand** and respect themselves and others. It does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It enables young people to be mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective relationships and sex education also support people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time. Effective health education focuses on physical health, mental wellbeing, online safety and basic first aid.

Learning about relationships, sex and health is a **lifelong process** and we recognise that **parents** are key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings. The Personal Development curriculum is an integral part of a broad and balanced **PSHE programme** and within the **Science National Curriculum**.

***The Personal Development Curriculum is delivered in a balanced and sensitive manner, within a moral and caring framework. This is intended to complement and support the role of parenting.***