

# PSHE – Personal, Social Health, and Economic Policy

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# Helm Academy

EMPOWERING MINDS. NAVIGATING FUTURES

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Child Protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Helm Academy Virtual School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

**Policy Issues and Updates**

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## Policy Context and Rationale

This policy covers Helm Academy Virtual School's approach to PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) and Citizenship education.

We are required to teach RSHE as part of the revised Department for Education statutory guidance. Documents that inform the school's PSHE&C and RSHE Policy include:

- ✓ Education Act (1996)
- ✓ Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- ✓ Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- ✓ Equality Act (2010)
- ✓ Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- ✓ Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory safeguarding guidance
- ✓ Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- ✓ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Statutory Guidance (2019)
- ✓ Human Rights Act 1998

## Creating a safe and supportive learning environment:

Because PSHE and RSHE education stimulates discussions based on pupils' real-life experiences, it is essential to establish a safe learning environment. PSHE and RSHE are predominantly delivered in small groups, in single year groups and in some cases, single gender groups. This enables clear ground rules to be established to ensure a safe learning environment. Occasionally, where appropriate, whole year groups, or the whole school may be involved in the delivery of particular topics and, again, these are designed to ensure a safe learning environment, delivered by experts in their field. In the course of PSHE or RSHE education lessons, pupils may indicate in some way that they are vulnerable or 'at risk'. There are clear links here with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and all staff have clarity about what is required in such circumstances.

## Entitlement and equality of opportunity:

We promote the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of gender, culture, ability or personal circumstance by taking these differences into account and adjusting lessons and delivery where necessary to enable all pupils to access the learning.

We expect our pupils to consider others' needs by addressing these issues directly and appropriately in PSHE and RSHE lessons, ensuring equality for all. Full PSHE and RSHE education provision is accessible to every pupil, although parents have a right to withdraw their children from those parts of Relationships and Sex Education not within the national curriculum Science programmes of study.

We recognise the right for all pupils to have access to PSHE and RSHE education which meets their PSHE Policy. V1

needs, providing the necessary support as required.

## Active engagement in learning:

Rather than passively receiving information, active involvement and discussion is most effective in teaching PSHE and RSHE education. Pupils will have opportunities to consider and clarify their values and beliefs, and to rehearse and develop enquiry and interpersonal skills. This policy ensures they will receive a comprehensive, balanced and relevant body of factual information to inform their present and future choices. Skills which will be enhanced during PSHE/RSHE lessons are cross-curricular, e.g. the ability to engage in discussion, take turns, explain a point of view and be tolerant of others' views. Opportunities for reading may arise when pupils are presented with written materials to discuss.

## Creating a safe and secure learning environment:

Pupils will bring differing levels of knowledge and understanding to any issue explored through PSHE or RSHE education. Often this prior learning is more complex than we might assume. Where possible, any new topic in PSHE/RSHE education should start by determining pupils' prior knowledge. (This will also enable teachers to make more effective judgements about pupils' development and progression in learning). Research shows that attempts to scare or shock young people into making a healthy choice rarely work and can indeed 'backfire' by inadvertently creating excitement, curiosity or even status among pupils who accept the risk.

This does not mean that potential consequences of the lifestyle choice should not be made clear, but balance is important. For example, young people frequently overestimate how often their peers take part in risky behaviours and feel that they are the 'odd ones out' if they don't do the same. It is important that they are reassured that the majority of young people actually make positive, healthy lifestyle choices. It is important that pupils are helped to make connections between the learning they receive in PSHE/RSHE education and their current and future 'real life' experiences.

## Intent

**Our PSHE / RSHE programme has the following intended outcomes:**

- ✓ To help pupils recognise their worth.
- ✓ To develop pupils' recognition of the importance of British values with regard to democracy, the rule of law and tolerance.
- ✓ To develop each pupil's ability to economic well-being.
- ✓ To develop each pupil's capacity for leading a fulfilling, responsible life as a member of a caring and thinking society.
- ✓ To provide opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each pupil.
- ✓ To promote a happy and healthy School community, reflecting the ethos of the school.
- ✓ To help pupils develop healthy relationships in all aspects of their lives and an understanding of issues such as consent within sexual relationships.
- ✓ To promote the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion (in-line with the school's EDI initiative), and to warn pupils about the dangers of stereotyping and discrimination in all its forms.
- ✓ To develop a PSHE/RSHE curriculum that both covers the statutory content for all pupils and can flexibly adapt to emerging PSHE/RSHE learning needs of the pupils.

## Implementation

### Teaching and Learning:

The skill of critical reflection and open discussion is at the heart of learning in PSHE/RSHE education. To this end, PSHE/RSHE lessons will strive to give pupils ample opportunity to voice their opinions, concerns, and questions and pupils will be made aware that no question is off limits or “stupid” in any way. Pupils are also encouraged to listen to the opinions and inquiries from others in the room, and to treat everybody’s verbal discourse with respect and courtesy.

Planning PSHE/RSHE takes the form of a whole-school curriculum overview from Year 7 to Year 11, long-term plans, and medium-term plans. The overview details the how the PSHE/RSHE curriculum sequences from the earliest start point for a pupil to the end of their time at Helm Academy Virtual School. Long-term and medium-term plans give more detail about what pupils will learn in a specific academic year and half-term, respectively.

In order to ensure coverage of all of the statutory PSHE topics, the Helm Academy Virtual School PSHE curriculum closely tracks the recommended topics contained in the PSHE scheme of work provided by the PSHE Society. However, we have made some adaptations for our pupils’ needs in terms of resources and lesson content. We also allow for teachers to diverge from the planned curriculum to respond to emerging PSHE-related issues for individual classes. For example, a friendship-related issue within a particular tutor group might require an exceptional PSHE lesson to deal with the problem and remind pupils about the steps to take to ensure healthy relationships.

On occasion, whole year groups or the whole school may have PSHE/RSHE sessions delivered by an outside speaker or organisation. Our provision is further enriched by material covered in Assemblies.

Finally, PSHE/RSHE will be delivered not only in timetabled PSHE/RSHE lessons. Instead, the Golden Thread nature of PSHE/RSHE will require all pupil-facing staff to take some responsibility for delivering the PSHE/RSHE curriculum. For example, prescient PSHE/RSHE topics are addressed in weekly assemblies and later discussed at least once per week in tutor time – records of these discussions are saved in a centralised database on the school server. Furthermore, cross-curricular opportunities between PSHE/RSHE and other subjects are regularly identified and acted upon (e.g., cyberbullying can be dealt with in both PSHE/RSHE lessons and in IT).

## Review of implementation

The implementation of this Policy is reviewed annually by the school’s Senior Leadership Team in consultation with staff and a report is made to the Governance Body.

The school may submit to Helm Academy Virtual School’s Board, proposals for amendments to this Policy.

## Impact

After having completed their time at Helm Academy Virtual School, we intend that the PSHE/RSHE will have equipped pupils with sufficient knowledge and practical skills that they can use to navigate the world in a safe, respectful, and tolerant way.

Furthermore, the PSHE/RSHE programme will enable pupils to feel confident to engage with people from all walks of life in a safe, inquisitive, and respectful manner that reflects the 5 “British Values” that underpins much of the teaching and learning at Helm Academy Virtual School.

Finally, pupils who partake in the PSHE/RSHE curriculum at Helm Academy Virtual School will be able to make responsible choices about their physical, mental, and sexual health; they will also be able to make mature and responsible decision about relationships and friendships and be able to notice when a relationship is displaying negative or exploitative traits. All pupils will have the knowledge and foresight to spot instances of abuse, coercion, grooming, and exploitation aimed either at themselves or at others, and be aware of how to seek help in such a situation.

To gauge the impact and Assessment for PSHE/RSHE is carried out with half-termly summative assessments. Instead of presenting pupils with encourage pupils to freely express what they have learnt rather than asking them specific exam-style questions. Because of the discourse / heavy nature of PSHE topics, we also accept pupils’ verbal input as responses to assessment questions. In addition to summative assessments, teachers delivering PSHE also perform a half-termly holistic assessment of the pupil’s progress against the waypoints identified in the medium-term planning. The holistic assessment will take into account multiple seams of pupil-borne evidence, such as:

- ✓ Pupil work
- ✓ Pupil contributions to class discussions
- ✓ Pupil attendance
- ✓ Pupil rewards
- ✓ Records of pupils’ engagement with PSHE/RSHE-related issues in other contexts (e.g., PSHE/RSHE in Tutor Time).

The progress of each pupil through the PSHE curriculum is regularly checked to ensure consistent learning. Pupils who fail to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the waypoints in each half term are encouraged to complete some “gap-bridging” work to ensure they possess the same knowledge of the PSHE curriculum as their peers. If required, the attention of the SENDCo is sought for pupils whose progress is particularly worrisome via the use of Attainment Narratives.

Pupils are also regularly asked for their opinions on how well they feel their learning has progressed in PSHE/RSHE, and what could be done to improve their enjoyment and learning of specific topics. Confidentiality and handling disclosures:

Due to the nature of PSHE/RSHE education, pupils’ learning may result in them seeking advice or support on a specific personal issue. Teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality; it is important for everyone’s safety that teachers and pupils are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential. It is also very important for external contributors, including school nurses, to be clear about these rules and that whilst working in the classroom, they are bound by the school’s confidentiality policy.

More information can be found in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## Responding to pupils’ questions

It is important that pupils feel able to ask any questions that they wish and that their questions are valued. However, consideration should be given to how to respond to questions. If necessary, teachers should feel able to ask a pupil to wait for an answer to give them time to consult with the school’s leadership team if they feel this appropriate, or if the question raises potential safeguarding concerns. (For instance: ‘That is a really interesting question and I need time to think

because I want to give you a proper answer.’)

Teachers should feel able to work with colleagues, if necessary, to construct an appropriate answer.

## Links to other school policies and areas of the curriculum

This policy supports and complements the following other school policies:

- ✓ Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- ✓ Anti Bullying Policy
- ✓ Curriculum Policy
- ✓ Online Safety Policy
- ✓ Prevent Duty Policy
- ✓ Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- ✓ Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy Involving Parents and Carers:

Legislation states that parents have the right to withdraw their children from aspects of sex education which are not part of the Science curriculum. Any requests of this nature should be addressed to the Head Teacher, where a meeting will be arranged to fully understand the wishes of the parent / carer and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parent / carer's request to withdraw the 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. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from other aspects of the Relationships Education or Health Education, or any other part of the PSHE programme of study.

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