PSHE and Wellbeing Policy

Revised 6 November 2026 | Next review November 2027 or sooner if guidance changes

Aims

The aims of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education at Watling Academy are:

To develop the knowledge, skills and attributes students need to manage life's challenges and make the most of life's opportunities.

To develop the skills students need to make a positive contribution to our local community and to society.

To reinforce the values and ethos of the Academy.

PSHE at Watling Academy includes health and wellbeing, relationships and living in the wider world, including careers, economic wellbeing, online safety and drugs education. Our provision supports the Watling Way and the values of Respect, Responsibility and Kindness.

The curriculum will be reviewed in response to students' needs, pupil voice, local safeguarding information and emerging risks. Changes will be age and developmentally appropriate, and preventative teaching will be sequenced before students are likely to encounter risks. Parents and carers will be informed in advance of material changes from the published programme and offered access to relevant resources.

Statutory requirements

RSE and health education are compulsory at Watling Academy. Wider PSHE provision also supports students' personal development and preparation for adult life. Statutory RSHE requirements must not be treated as optional because they are delivered within PSHE.

The Academy must provide RSE and health education under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

The Academy must have regard to the Department for Education's revised Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance, effective from 1 September 2026. Where the Academy departs from a recommendation expressed as "should" or "should not", it will record good reasons. The Academy will comply with the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, and follow Keeping children safe in education 2026 and current safeguarding procedures.

This policy also complies with the terms of our funding agreement.

Watling Academy values PSHE beyond the statutory requirements, underpinned by Respect, Responsibility and Kindness.

Content and delivery

What we teach

The planned programme will cover all secondary RSE and health education outcomes in the revised statutory guidance by the end of secondary education. The PSHE Lead will maintain a year-by-year curriculum map identifying the units, teaching points, resources and assessment opportunities through which each outcome is taught and revisited.

The published programme and Trust RSE policy must distinguish relationships education, health education and sex education clearly, including where they share a lesson. Sex education content and its timing will be explained to parents and carers in advance so that withdrawal requests can be considered accurately. Science content will be identified separately.

Online safety and wellbeing

Students will learn how to build respectful relationships online, protect their privacy and personal information, evaluate sources and advertising, and recognise manipulation, misinformation and harmful content. Teaching will address how online experiences can affect relationships, body image, sleep and mental wellbeing.

Teaching will include AI-generated images and deepfakes, intimate image abuse, grooming, sextortion, scams, coercive control, stalking and the risks of AI chatbots creating false intimacy or

giving harmful advice. Students will learn how to report concerns, seek help and access appropriate support to remove images, without being blamed for abuse.

Online safety is part of the Academy's safeguarding approach. Curriculum teaching complements the Academy's filtering, monitoring and reporting arrangements.

Teaching will develop students' ability to consider questions such as:

- What effect does being online have on the mental health of young people?
- On the internet, how are connections made, maintained, and ended differently?
- How can we teach young people to read online material critically?
- What opportunities and risks do online platforms create for careers and employability?
- What impact has the internet had on the selling and procurement of illegal drugs?
- What does having a digital reputation imply?
- How can you keep track of your online reputation?
- How can we recognise when online activity is affecting health, relationships or everyday life, and seek help?

Puberty and relationships and sex education

Teaching will build on primary learning about puberty and relationships, identify gaps and use accurate anatomical vocabulary. All students will learn about adolescent physical and emotional development, menstrual health and reproductive health, with appropriate adaptations.

Health education will include menstrual problems, endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome, fertility, menopause and when to seek professional advice. Students will also learn about preparation for pregnancy, pregnancy loss and accessing healthcare, including medical consent and Gillick competence.

RSE will develop the skills for safe, caring relationships, including respectful communication, consent, boundaries, ending relationships and recognising unequal power. Sexual ethics will include kindness and care beyond legal consent, including pressure and vulnerability. Teaching will cover contraception, STIs including HIV prevention and testing, and medically and legally accurate, impartial information about pregnancy options and sexual health services. Students will understand that they can choose to delay sex or enjoy relationships without sex.

Mental health and wellbeing

Teaching will support transitions, emotional literacy, coping with setbacks, resilience, connection and help-seeking. It will distinguish normal experiences of worry, sadness and loneliness from indications that further support may be needed, without encouraging students to diagnose themselves or others.

Students will learn how sleep, physical activity, time outdoors, relationships and community participation support wellbeing. They will learn when and how to seek help for themselves or another person through trusted adults, the pastoral and wellbeing teams and appropriate external services. Staff will follow safeguarding procedures where there is a concern about risk or harm.

Money management

Financial education develops practical skills in budgeting, saving, borrowing, managing debt, understanding income and making informed consumer choices. Careers learning develops aspirations, employability, teamwork and leadership. The PSHE Association programme informs planning but does not replace the statutory RSHE outcomes.

Teaching across Key Stages 3 and 4 will address fraud, targeted advertising, online financial risks and gambling, including the relationship between gambling and mental health harms. Students will practise evaluating choices and identifying reliable advice.

These are practical life skills that students will revisit as they gain independence and prepare for further education, training and employment.

Other health and safety learning includes healthy eating, exercise, oral health, hygiene, vaccination, antimicrobial resistance, sleep, self-care and navigating healthcare. Teaching will also cover drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping, including counterfeit products, synthetic substances,

spiking and methanol poisoning; road, rail and water safety; exploitation and knife crime; and first aid, CPR and defibrillators. The curriculum map will evidence coverage and progression.

How we teach it

PSHE is integral to the values of the Academy: Respect, Responsibility and Kindness, and our curriculum ethos of Milton Keynes, STEM and the Environment. Planned lessons are reinforced through the wider curriculum, assemblies, enrichment and everyday school life.

PSHE and Wellbeing will be delivered through the tutorial programme and planned weekly tutor-led sessions. The PSHE Lead will provide sequenced teaching materials and guidance. Leaders will check that allocated time is sufficient to teach, revisit and assess the required content, including arranging catch-up learning where sessions are missed.

Assemblies, themed events, community links, clubs and visiting speakers will complement the planned programme. The PSHE Lead will coordinate with science, computing, citizenship, PE and other subjects to avoid gaps and unnecessary repetition. Supplementary activities will not replace systematic teaching of statutory content.

The role of the tutor is central to the personal and social development of the students. Tutors are supported by their Head of Year, and they are responsible for overseeing the progress of students in their tutor groups. They will establish positive, developing relationships to support students' achievements.

Further opportunities for students' personal learning are provided when the ethos of the Academy generates, in both staff and students, a feeling that they are valued and cared for, and that there are opportunities for them to contribute to and participate in Academy activities. Praise and encouragement help to develop self-esteem, and as such, contribute to students' personal development.

Academy trips will play an important role in contributing to the PSHE curriculum.

Watling Academy will have strong links with members of the community and with local industry who will deliver sessions to students.

Teaching will include discussion, scenarios, reflection and practical skills. Staff will distinguish facts and current law from opinions, provide balanced treatment of political issues where required and avoid promoting personal beliefs. Fundamental British values will inform teaching and respectful discussion.

Inclusion and differentiation

Teaching will recognise students' different abilities, maturity, experiences, family circumstances, sexual orientation, religion or belief and other protected characteristics. It will comply with equality law, challenge prejudice and avoid stigmatising students or families. Healthy same-sex relationships will be integrated into the programme, and sexual health information will be relevant to all students.

Students with additional educational needs

Students with SEND are entitled to accessible PSHE and RSHE. Teachers will work with the SENCO to adapt language, resources, pace and teaching methods, including repetition, visual support and supported practice where needed. Planning will take account of individual development and vulnerability to bullying, abuse and exploitation, without assuming that SEND reduces a student's need for this learning.

It is the Academy's policy not to withdraw young people with special educational needs from PSHE to catch up on other subjects, as we believe that these aspects of personal and social development are as important as academic achievement.

Staff will receive guidance and training appropriate to the content they teach, including safeguarding, inclusive practice and managing difficult questions. Staff must raise concerns about their knowledge or confidence with the PSHE Lead before delivery so that suitable support or alternative teaching arrangements can be made.

Assessment will focus on students' knowledge, understanding and skills, rather than personal beliefs, private experiences or disclosures. Tutors will provide feedback and communicate relevant progress or support needs to parents and carers through appropriate school channels.

Preventing misogyny and abuse

Teaching will address sexism, misogyny, sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic abuse, coercive control and exploitation. Students will explore harmful online influences, including incel ideology, and the effect of pornography on attitudes and expectations. Staff will challenge harmful ideas without labelling or stigmatising boys, and use positive role models. Lessons will not direct students towards harmful influencers or content.

Students will learn how to recognise unsafe behaviour, seek help and support others safely. Teaching will include forced marriage, FGM, virginity testing, hymenoplasty and the dangers of strangulation and suffocation. Students will understand that abuse is never the victim's fault and that responsibility rests with the person causing harm. Lessons will teach relevant law accurately and avoid fear-based approaches.

Safe teaching and safeguarding

Teachers will agree ground rules, use fictional scenarios and distancing techniques, and provide opportunities for anonymous questions. Students will not be required to disclose personal experiences, and may decline to contribute to a particular discussion while remaining engaged in learning. Support will be planned for students whose experiences make content particularly difficult.

Staff must explain the limits of confidentiality. Any disclosure or concern must be acted on immediately under safeguarding procedures and reported to the DSL or deputy. Staff will listen, avoid investigative questioning, record accurately and never promise secrecy. Immediate danger requires urgent action through the Academy's emergency and safeguarding procedures. Relevant mandatory reporting duties, including the teacher duty concerning known cases of FGM in under-18s, must be followed.

Questions will be answered accurately and sensitively at a level appropriate to the class. A teacher may defer an answer, consult the PSHE Lead or DSL, or arrange a private follow-up. Where a question concerns sex education from which a student has been withdrawn, the teacher will respect the withdrawal arrangements and seek advice rather than deliver that content incidentally. Safeguarding concerns must still be addressed.

Teaching about suicide prevention, self-harm and eating disorders

The PSHE Lead and DSL will plan how suicide prevention is addressed safely, with advice from qualified mental health professionals. Before directly addressing suicide, staff must receive appropriate evidence-based training. Decisions about timing and approach will consider maturity, personal experiences and parents' views. Core teaching will emphasise connection, coping, hope and seeking adult help.

Any teaching about self-harm or eating disorders will use specialist advice and reliable resources, with trained staff and clear support arrangements. Lessons will avoid methods, instructions, graphic or emotive imagery, and descriptions that could encourage imitation or romanticise harm. Concerns about individual students require immediate safeguarding action, not classroom discussion of their circumstances.

Equality and teaching about sex and gender reassignment

Students will learn the facts and law about biological sex and the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, including that the legal protections are distinct. Teaching will distinguish these facts from contested views. It will not teach as fact that everyone has a gender identity, reinforce gender stereotypes or suggest that social transition is a simple solution to distress. Resources will be checked for oversimplification and stereotyping. All students will be treated with dignity; bullying and discriminatory behaviour will be challenged.

Working with parents and carers

The Academy will consult parents and carers when developing and reviewing RSE policy, communicate curriculum content and timing, and offer a representative sample of resources. Parents and carers can request to view all RSHE materials, including external providers' materials, by contacting the PSHE Lead through the Academy office. The Academy will arrange

accessible viewing or another suitable way to access the material. Consultation informs provision but does not give a veto over statutory content.

Copyright will be respected through appropriate access arrangements, acknowledgement of authorship and an agreement not to copy or redistribute material except as permitted by law. Copyright or a provider's confidentiality clause must not be used to refuse parental access. The Academy will not enter into contracts that prevent parents from seeing content used with their children.

Requests for withdrawal from sex education

Parents and carers may request withdrawal from some or all sex education within RSE. They cannot withdraw a student from relationships education, health education or topics taught as part of the science curriculum. A sensitive topic is not automatically sex education; the PSHE Lead will identify the relevant learning content when considering requests.

Requests should be addressed to the Headteacher through the Academy office. The Headteacher will discuss the request with the parent or carer and, where appropriate, the student, explain the curriculum and implications of withdrawal, and record the discussion, decision and agreed arrangements. In secondary education, refusal is possible in exceptional circumstances, for example safeguarding concerns or a student's particular vulnerability. Decisions will be considered individually and explained.

From three terms before a student turns 16, the student may choose to opt back into sex education even where a parent has requested withdrawal. Students will be informed of this option, and the Academy will arrange access during that period. Where withdrawal applies, the Academy will provide appropriate, purposeful supervised education and ensure staff know which content the student is withdrawn from.

External visitors and resources

The Academy remains responsible for all teaching delivered by external providers. The PSHE Lead will check credentials, lesson plans and materials in advance for accuracy, accessibility, age suitability and bias, and confirm how parents can view them. Visitors will receive safeguarding and confidentiality instructions, and a member of school staff will remain present. Sessions will be evaluated and linked to the planned programme.

Roles and responsibilities

The Local School Board

The Local School Board will oversee implementation and hold the Headteacher to account, within the Trust's scheme of delegation. Trustees retain their statutory responsibilities. Approval will follow the Trust's governance arrangements.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for consistent delivery, sufficient curriculum time, staffing and training, and decisions on withdrawal requests. Operational leadership is delegated to the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Personal Development and PSHE and Wellbeing, working with the DSL, SENCO and pastoral leaders.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

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

Students

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

Monitoring arrangements

The PSHE Lead will monitor provision through curriculum and resource reviews, learning walks, student work, assessment, pupil voice and feedback from staff and parents. Monitoring will

consider access and progress for students with SEND and other vulnerable groups, missed learning and whether students know how to obtain help.

An annual review will check every secondary statutory outcome against the curriculum map, confirm that materials remain accurate and age appropriate, identify training needs and agree improvements with senior leaders.

Safeguarding patterns and student feedback will inform curriculum review without identifying individual students in published reports. Leaders will report strengths, gaps and actions to the Local School Board.

The PSHE Lead will review this policy annually with the Headteacher and DSL, and sooner where legislation, guidance or local needs change. Parents and carers must be consulted when the RSE policy is developed or reviewed, and student views will inform review. Approval will follow Trust arrangements. The approved policy will be published on the Academy website and supplied free of charge on request.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Trust Relationships and Sex Education policy
- SMSC Policy - School
- Anti-bullying Policy - School
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures
- Behaviour Policy - School
- Trips Procedure - Trust

Appendix 1

This overview is retained from the supplied policy as a reference. It has not been verified as the current 2026 to 2027 teaching sequence and is not evidence of full coverage of the revised guidance. Before publication, the PSHE Lead must replace or confirm it against the current year-group programme and complete the statutory-outcome mapping. Unit titles and placement must match actual delivery, including any changes made during the year.

Existing curriculum overview supplied with the September 2026 policy

	Autumn 1 Health & wellbeing	Autumn 2 Living in the wider world	Spring 1 Relationships	Spring 2 Health & wellbeing	Summer 1 Relationships	Summer 2 Living in the wider world
Year 7	Transition and British Values Transition to secondary school and they begin to look at the fundamental British values of Democracy, The rule of law, Individual responsibility and Mutual respect.	Developing skills and aspirations Careers, teamwork and enterprise skills, and raising aspirations	Diversity Diversity, prejudice, and bullying	Health and puberty Healthy routines, influences on health, puberty and unwanted contact	Building relationships Self-worth, romance and friendships (including online) and relationship boundaries	Financial decision making Saving, borrowing, budgeting and making financial choices
Year 8	Drugs and alcohol Alcohol and drug misuse and pressures relating to drug use	Community and careers Equality of opportunity in careers and life choices, and different types and patterns of work	Discrimination Discrimination in all its forms, including: racism, religious discrimination, disability, discrimination, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia	Emotional wellbeing Mental health and emotional wellbeing, including body image and coping strategies	Identity and relationships Sexual orientation, consent, 'sexting', and an introduction to contraception	Digital literacy Online safety, digital literacy, media reliability, and gambling hooks
Year 9	Peer influence, substance **use and gangs** Healthy and unhealthy friendships, assertiveness, substance misuse, and gang exploitation	Setting goals Learning strengths, career options and goal setting as part of the GCSE options process	Respectful relationships Families and parenting, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and relationship changes	Healthy lifestyle Diet, exercise, lifestyle balance and healthy choices and first aid	Intimate relationships Relationships and sex education including consent, contraception, the risks of STIs, FGM and attitudes to pornography	Employability skills Employability and online presence
Year 10	Exploring influence The influence and impact of drugs, gangs, role models and the media	Financial decision making The impact of financial decisions, debt, gambling and the impact of advertising on financial choices	Healthy relationships Relationships and sex expectations, myths, pleasure and challenges, including the impact of the media and pornography	Mental health Mental health and ill health, stigma, safeguarding health, including during periods of transition or change	Work experience Preparation for and evaluation of work experience and readiness for work	Addressing extremism and radicalisation Communities, belonging and challenging extremism
Year 11	Building for the future Self-efficacy, stress management, and future opportunities	Next steps Application processes, and skills for further education, employment and career progression	Communication in relationships Personal values, assertive communication (including in relation to contraception and sexual health), relationship challenges and abuse	Independence Responsible health choices, and safety in independent contexts	Families Different families and parental responsibilities, pregnancy, marriage and forced marriage and changing relationships	

Review record for school approval

This revision updates the September 2026 policy. Yellow highlighting shows additions and rewritten paragraphs; where a paragraph has been rewritten, the whole paragraph is highlighted. This is a clean revised draft, not a tracked-deletions comparison.

Before approval, confirm the current curriculum overview and outcome mapping, the allocation of teaching time, and the Trust RSE policy wording. Confirm the responsible role titles, contact route and approving body against the Trust scheme of delegation. Record parent consultation, pupil engagement and the approval date; these processes have not been represented as already completed.

The original references to SRE, an unnamed older statutory framework and the named pastoral postholder have been replaced. Provision on parent access, withdrawal, safeguarding, visitors, assessment, SEND and sensitive teaching has been expanded. Curriculum wording now addresses the revised online, relationship, health and safety expectations.

The Trust RSE policy and the school's other linked policies were not supplied and have not been reviewed. Updating this policy alone does not establish that classroom delivery or associated policies meet every statutory requirement.

Primary source: Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, July 2025, effective 1 September 2026. Relevant sections include developing a policy and withdrawal (pages 4 to 7), secondary content (pages 13 to 19 and 25 to 31), resources and parental access (pages 32 to 35), and equality and safeguarding (pages 36 to 40).

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

Safeguarding reference: Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education 2026, in force from 1 September 2026. Apply the current version alongside the Academy's safeguarding procedures.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

Sources checked 6 November 2026. Remove this review record and change highlights when issuing the formally approved policy, if a clean publication copy is required.