

PSHE/RSE POLICY

BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL

Last Review Date	31 Aug 2026
Policy endorsed by	The Trustees & School Management Committee
Policy is maintained by	Head of Boarding & Pastoral Coordinator
Next review date	August 2027
Review body	Pastoral Coordinator and School Management Committee

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1 Rationale and ethos

This policy covers our school's approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education, and specifically to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

It has been developed by the PSHE team (consisting of the Pastoral Coordinator, who is also the main *Healthy Living* teacher), and the Head of Boarding, in consultation with staff, students and parents.

The policy is informed and underpinned by [Brockwood's intentions](#) which are all closely linked to the aims and values of PSHE education.

Based on these intentions, aspects of PSHE education are integral parts of Brockwood's everyday life and curriculum. To learn about oneself (personal), about relationships with others (social), about a healthy relationship with one's own body and mind (health) and about talent and right livelihood (economic) are all crucial intentions of Brockwood Park School and are emphasised in both the daily living together as well as in specific activities such as Morning Silent Meetings, Inquiry Times, Floor Meetings, ATWAMs and *Healthy Living* classes as outlined in further detail in this policy.

Our education aims to develop:

- Self-motivated learners who have the skills to learn about themselves, the world and any subject with attention, confidence and critical thinking.
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives, with special consideration for their relationships with their own bodies, other people and nature.
- Responsible citizens of the world who are able to make a positive contribution to global society and/or their immediate environment.

Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) helps to give students the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives. It aims to help them understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. As explained above, at Brockwood much of this education is integrated into the wider curriculum and happens as part of the day-to-day living together in a vibrant international community. Specific lessons and activities such as the ones outlined in this policy support this learning process for our students.

2 Legislation (statutory regulations and guidelines)

Brockwood is an independent school, and the requirements that apply to us come through the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#). Part 1 of the Schedule requires that the curriculum includes personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aim and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard

to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, and that students are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. Part 2 sets the standard for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Relationships and sex education is required for every student receiving secondary education, under paragraph 2A of the same Schedule. In making that provision we have regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance, [*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education*](#), published in July 2025 and in force from 1 September 2026.

This policy is the written statement of our Relationships and Sex Education provision that the Regulations require us to keep up to date; we consult parents before making or revising it, as described [below](#). It is published on the school website and provided free of charge to anyone who asks for it.

Health education is not statutory for independent schools. We make provision for it as part of PSHE, drawing on the health and wellbeing sections of the guidance where they are useful to us.

3 Roles and responsibilities

PSHE and RSE at Brockwood are overseen by the **Pastoral Team**, which consists of the Pastoral Coordinator and the Head of Boarding. The Pastoral Coordinator teaches the *Healthy Living* course and keeps up to date through regular training in PSHE and RSE teaching. Floor meetings and Boys' and Girls' Nights are led by residential staff, who can also take leading roles in organising or delivering ATWAMs and shorter presentations at school meetings. More sensitive topics, such as suicide prevention, are taught only by the Pastoral Coordinator or by qualified teachers, through *Healthy Living* or an ATWAM. Anyone delivering PSHE or RSE works in continuous contact with the Pastoral Team, knows the contents of this policy, and receives basic training in the principles of safe and effective practice set out below.

4 Curriculum design

As a small school, many of our PSHE activities happen in mixed-age groups, and we plan the content so that it works for the range of ages in the room. Relationships and sex education is provided to every student at Brockwood, and it reaches them in two ways: through the *Healthy Living* course, which our youngest students take, and through the whole-school activities described below, in which everyone takes part. Taken together these cover the content set out in the statutory guidance. The detailed content is held in the *Healthy Living* scheme of work and in the record of ATWAM and floor meeting activities kept by the Pastoral Coordinator.

4.1 Healthy Living course

All students joining the school at 14 or 15 attend a compulsory course called *Healthy Living* for the first one or two years of their stay at Brockwood. They also participate in the whole school activities described further below, such as Inquiry Time, ATWAM, floor meetings, Boys' and Girls' Nights, etc.

Healthy Living is a weekly, 1.5-hour course which brings together PSHE and movement education. It spans two academic years, and students joining the school at 15 usually attend only the second year, in line with their age group. The course is organised in the areas below, and the detailed content, which changes from year to year, is held in the *Healthy Living* scheme of work.

- Relationships and sex
- Emotions and mental wellbeing
- Stress and its management
- Health prevention and use of health services
- Sleep and nutrition
- Digital safety and media literacy
- Addictions and substance misuse
- Financial literacy
- Fundamental human values and diversity
- Movement, body awareness and injury prevention

4.2 Whole-school activities

Brockwood has a number of whole-school activities built into the weekly timetable. As a small school of only about 50-75 students, some of our PSHE related activities happen in mixed-age groups (14-19 years old). We take extra care to make sure the activities are appropriate for all students, and sometimes divide the student body according to age groups to make sure the needs of each age group are being met. Below there is an overview of these whole school activities, including PSHE related contents.

Floor meetings are weekly forums which we use regularly to cover important PSHE/RSE related topics, depending on the current needs of students and issues that arise during the year.

We also have regular (around once a term) **Boys' and Girls' Nights** which are evening activities in which all the female staff meet with the female students, and all male staff meet with the male students, to freely discuss topics related to relationships and sex. These activities are usually relatively informal, using a dialogue format. For some topics, the female staff might meet with the male students and the male staff with the female students, if it is deemed helpful and appropriate for the topic.

School Meetings are used for shorter presentations. Every year, these include presentations on the following topics:

- internet safety and digital well-being
- hearing protection
- sun safety
- mental health and well-being
- global events and living in the wider world (through weekly *newsflash* presentations)

Inquiry Time is used to explore questions about relationships, freedom and responsibility and topics related to living in the wider world. Students can get involved in proposing topics and organise Inquiry Time sessions. Most sessions are organised by staff and held in line with the deeper intentions of the school.

ATWAMs (Another Time We All Meet) are longer whole-school sessions, usually 1.5 hours, and at least one or two each year are given to PSHE topics.

Across these forums we cover six areas of PSHE education, with the sub-topics within each rotating from year to year:

- Living in the wider world
- Mental health
- Our relationship with technology
- Diet, nutrition and healthy lifestyle
- Relationships and sexual education
- Drugs and substance misuse

One or two of these are usually given a dedicated ATWAM in the course of a year, and the others are taken up through floor meetings, Boys' and Girls' Nights and Inquiry Times, so that the subject can be met in whatever form suits it and at a point when it is alive in the school. The Pastoral Coordinator keeps a record of which areas have been covered and in which forum, so that over the year we can see that all six have been met.

4.3 Careers and opportunities

Students also have access to in-depth guidance about their *Life after Brockwood*. A dedicated team offers weekly one-to-one slots to students who want to talk about their future, and runs presentations and workshops on discovering one's own talent and what right livelihood means, on universities, apprenticeships, internships and gap years, and on the practical skills of applying for work. Some of these are whole-school activities and others are open to students with a particular interest. Details are in the *Careers Guidance Policy*.

4.4 Optional activities

Core group meetings happen weekly and all students and staff are invited to participate. The core group is a forum in which different members of the school can highlight issues that have come up in the living together and propose solutions or offer different points of views so that the whole community can develop a wider understanding and improve its processes. This forum offers students a unique opportunity to voice their points of views and listen to others' concerns in a safe and open space, develop a deeper understanding of the school and participate in decision making processes. This enables them to contribute positively to the school and community, learn to work in a team as well as develop better communication skills, more empathy for others, and an ability to make informed, responsible decisions.

Weekend workshops, which happen throughout the academic year, offer interested students the opportunity to learn about other PSHE related skills and topics. Examples include workshops on life skills, home economics, mending, bike repair, cooking, herbal medicine.

5 Best practice in PSHE

The Pastoral Coordinator and other key staff train regularly with the PSHE Association and similar organisations, and we work to their principles of safe and effective practice in any PSHE or RSE activity, whether it is a *Healthy Living* lesson, an ATWAM, a floor meeting or a Boys' or Girls' Night. In practice this means the following.

- We make sure there are common agreements in each group, which can include the right to pass, a commitment to use appropriate language, keeping the conversation in the room, and a non-judgemental approach.
- We often work through scenarios, stories and fictional characters rather than through students' own lives, so that difficult material can be looked at without anyone having to expose themselves.
- We do not try to shock, shame or scare students into healthy choices, which rarely works and often has the opposite effect.
- A teacher may choose not to answer a question in front of the whole group and to speak with the student afterwards instead, and may consult a colleague or the Pastoral Coordinator first, and anonymous forms or question boxes let students raise what they would not raise aloud. Where a question goes beyond what we teach, or relates to sex education from which a student has been withdrawn, the teacher speaks with the student separately, suggests they talk with their parents or another trusted adult, or points them to a reliable source.
- Sensitive topics such as suicide, self-harm and eating disorders are taught only by the Pastoral Coordinator or a qualified teacher, as set out above, and in teaching them we use accurate and straightforward language, we do not describe methods, and we avoid emotive language, images or film.

- We tell students where to find help, both here and outside the school, and any member of staff who becomes concerned about a student in the course of an activity follows the *Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy*.

6 Resources and working with parents

We choose resources that are accurate, from credible sources such as the PSHE Association, suited to the age and background of the students in the room, and consistent with what this policy sets out. We are careful with material from organisations holding a strong view on a contested subject, and we look at anything an outside organisation provides before it is used.

Parents can see any of the material we use in PSHE and RSE. A parent who would like to look at what is taught should contact the Pastoral Coordinator, who will arrange for them to see the relevant materials, and we will not enter into any agreement with an outside provider that prevents us from doing this.

Parents also have the opportunity to comment on this policy. It is normally raised at the first online parent question and answer session of the year in September, and again at any other point when we are considering a substantial change. What is taught, and how, remains a decision for the school, and what parents tell us is taken into account in reaching it.

7 Inclusivity

This section is to be read in conjunction with the school's *Equality and Diversity Policy*.

Classroom practice and pedagogy will take into account students' age, ability, readiness, cultural background and special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and will be adjusted to enable all students to access the learning. We use PSHE and RSE education as a way to address diversity issues and to ensure equality for all by addressing contextual issues identified through our pastoral management system. PSHE and RSE delivery is designed to comply with the *Equality Act 2010*. Provisions within the *Equality Act* allow the school to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of protected characteristics.

8 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

8.1 Definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Relationships and sex education is learning about the emotional, social, legal and physical aspects of growing up, of relationships of every kind, of human sexuality and of sexual health. Relationships education covers friendships, family life, intimate and committed relationships, consent and boundaries, how to recognise a relationship that is harmful, and the

way all of this is now lived out online as well as in person. Sex education covers human reproduction, contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health.

We teach these together rather than separately, because at this age they are not separable in students' lives, and we do so in a way that is meant to help a young person understand themselves and act with care towards other people, rather than to alarm them. Good relationships and sex education does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It gives students the ground on which to make their own decisions about whether and when to enter into a sexual relationship, and the confidence to resist pressure and not to apply it.

8.2 Responsibilities and delivery overview

Statutory content is covered through the *Healthy Living* course and through the whole-school forums, so that relationships and sex education continues for all students through ATWAMs, floor meetings and Boys' and Girls' Nights, and these questions can be met at the point when they are alive in the school rather than only in a timetabled lesson. In planning we mostly draw on the [Department for Education guidance](#) and the [PSHE Association](#).

We aim to ensure that students come to know what constitutes healthy relationships, whether friendships, working relationships or intimate ones, and can recognise when a relationship is not right and know what can be done about it. That includes contraception and sexual health, resisting pressure and not applying it, and what is and is not acceptable behaviour between people. We give particular attention to sexual violence, harassment between peers, misogyny and "incel" culture, deepfakes and pornography, which are the pressures our students are most exposed to and least prepared for.

Reproduction is also taught in science, including the reproductive systems, the menstrual cycle, fertilisation, gestation and birth.

8.3 Sex education and the right to withdraw

The distinction between relationships education and sex education matters because a parent may ask for their son or daughter to be excused from sex education, and not from anything else we teach. The sex education we provide is planned into the *Healthy Living* course, and it may also come up in an ATWAM, a floor meeting or a Boys' or Girls' Night, since those forums follow what is alive in the school at the time. Everything else in this policy is relationships education, health education or personal, social and economic education, and cannot be withdrawn from, including what we teach about consent and boundaries, abuse, sexual violence and harassment, pornography, online safety and the law, all of which we regard as part of keeping students safe. Nor can the reproduction taught in science.

Where a request is made, a member of the School Management Committee meets the parents, and the student where that is appropriate, to understand what lies behind the request and to talk through what is taught and why, including what a student loses by not being there and the likelihood that they will hear a version of it from their friends in any case. We would

normally grant the request, and we keep a written record of the conversation and of the decision. We may decline in exceptional circumstances, for example where there is a safeguarding concern or a particular vulnerability in the student, though we would expect to reach that point only after talking it through with the parents.

Two further things follow. From three terms before a student turns 16, the student may choose to take part in sex education whatever their parents have asked for, and we make sure the student knows this; a student turning 16 in the autumn term, for instance, can decide this from the start of the previous autumn term. And a student who is excused still needs to be doing something worthwhile in that time, so the Pastoral Coordinator works out which sessions are affected and arranges it, and tells the parents beforehand if a sex education topic is added to a whole-school activity in response to something arising in the school.

9 Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

9.1 Monitoring

Our PSHE provision is reviewed on a yearly basis as part of our pastoral review (done by the pastoral team, the designated PSHE (*Healthy Living*) teacher and the School Management Committee at the end of each academic year). The review consists of gathering feedback from staff and students on PSHE provision as well as student interviews.

9.2 Areas for assessment

We assess students' knowledge and understanding through classroom discussion and formative activities. Teachers should collect evidence of learning to make a judgement about students' progress. This may include: presentations, written evidence, group work, observations.

In our *Healthy Living* class, students receive formal assessment and feedback forms at the end of a teaching block or term. These are meant to supplement the assessment done and feedback received naturally in the classroom setting. We also aim to make baseline assessments at the beginning of each block of activities that allow for progress to be visualised more easily.

We also look at how students apply what they have learnt in the wider life of the school, in resolving conflict, in making decisions and in forming good relationships. Student voice will be influential in adapting and amending the material for PSHE and RSE to ensure it is up to date and relevant.

10 Confidentiality

Students are made aware that some information disclosed during PSHE and RSE related activities cannot be held confidentially, and will be informed that, if certain disclosures are made, the information may be disclosed to the school's DSL or safeguarding team. This is done at the beginning of the year as part of a safeguarding and mental health presentation, as well as in individual activities that might prompt students to disclose information. Students are also told that they can approach someone outside the school if they would rather not raise something here, and the ways of doing that are set out below.

11 Where students can find support

Students are made aware of counselling and information services both in and out of school and offered appropriate support.

This happens via a presentation at the beginning of the school year, in which the different ways to receive support are outlined to all students. This includes in-house pastoral support by teachers and the Pastoral Coordinator, in-house and online services by external providers such as several coaches and qualified counsellors as well as external counselling services such as [Childline](#) and [Kooth](#), which can be accessed via phone or internet.

The information about these ways of support is also permanently available to students via the pastoral section of the school noticeboard.

12 Outside speakers

We sometimes invite outside speakers to contribute to PSHE and RSE, and any proposal, whether it comes from a student or a member of staff, goes first to the School Management Committee. Before agreeing to a visit we carry out a risk assessment, look into the speaker and the organisation behind them, and ask to see in advance what they intend to cover, along with any presentation or material they plan to use, so that we can judge whether it is right for the students who will be there and whether it sits with the values of the school. We do not invite a speaker where any link is found to extremism. We agree with the speaker beforehand how confidentiality will work in the session and what they should do if a student tells them something that gives rise to a concern. Staff are present throughout, and they can interrupt or stop a session if what is being said does not meet what was agreed. The wider arrangements for guests, including identification, supervision and the register of visiting speakers, are set out in the *Guests & Visitors Policy*.