

September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

As a part of your child's education at the George Eliot Academy, we promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme. PSHE education is the curriculum subject that gives young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, healthy, productive lives and meet their full potential.

I am writing to let you know that, over the next five years, your child's class will be taking part in lessons that will focus on the relationships and sex education (RSE) aspect of this programme. RSE lessons in Year 7 will include teaching about: healthy relationships, including friendships and intimate relationships; families; growing and changing, including puberty; personal hygiene; changing feelings; becoming more independent; keeping safe and consent; developing self-esteem and confidence. Pupils will also have opportunities to ask questions that help prepare them for relationships of all kinds in the modern world.

PSHE education is taught throughout the school in every year group and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the staff. Please visit the school's website: <https://www.georgeeliot.midlandat.co.uk/content/?pid=83&contentid=70> for more details about our PSHE curriculum. All PSHE teaching will take place in a safe learning environment and is underpinned by our school ethos and values.

The new statutory guidance that started from September 2020 states that all pupils must take part in all RSE lessons. This means that:

- Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education.
- Parents will be able to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school) from any or all aspects of Sex Education, other than those which are part of the science curriculum, up to and until three terms before the age of 16.
- After that point, the guidance states that 'if the child wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with Sex Education during one of those terms.'
- Where pupils are withdrawn from Sex Education, schools should document the process and will have to 'ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.'

As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents; recent parental feedback on the RSE policy has indicated that parents continue to be supportive of the relationships and Sex Education programme. If you would like to find out more or discuss any concerns, I would urge you to contact me via email: Sophie.smith@midlandat.co.uk

Yours sincerely

Miss S Smith
Head of Religious Education and PSHE