The Norwood School,
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Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers,

Learning for Life at Norwood School

We thought that it might be helpful to update you again, at the start of a new academic year, on the way that we are delivering PHSE and RSE to students across the school. This information will be particularly helpful for parents of students new to the school.

Teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education is now compulsory in secondary schools and the content has been updated since SRE's introduction in 2000 to reflect changes that teenagers now experience in an increasingly online world.
Government Guidance in full can be found here

Our **Learning for Life** curriculum at Norwood continues to be refined and re-designed to help our students be safe and healthy, and to manage their personal and social lives in a positive way. **Learning for Life** provision at the Norwood School is delivered in a variety of ways, in both specified lessons, but as you would imagine, also through a variety of assemblies, talks, workshops, immersion days and also in curriculum time.

For example, in tutor time each day at the start of the day - pastoral staff deliver the following: **Mail on Monday** - a Head of Year's overview of the week ahead, with key, relevant, age appropriate messages and content. Year groups also meet on a biweekly rotation with an in person assembly, with frequent guest speakers, visiting professionals etc. **Together Tuesday** - the whole school listens to a pre-recorded assembly on one of a number of themes and topics that are pre planned across the year ahead. Topics will frequently tie in with national and global celebrations or awareness days. Tutors also use the Let's Talk About and the Let's Discuss Diversity presentations to facilitate meaningful group discussions about current affairs and topics that we feel deserve a platform that will inform, stimulate productive discussion and raise awareness of important issues and campaigns. **Wellbeing Wednesday** - these sessions will cover a range of topics including mental and physical health awareness and independent study techniques, eg VESPA. Tutors will also discuss the school values during these sessions. **Thoughtful Thursday** - Tutors use this time to check in with students as well as carry out equipment checks. Students will also have an opportunity to do some silent reading. House assemblies take place on Thursdays at various points in the year. **Feel Good Fridays** - A chance for tutor groups to celebrate the positive and reward those who get it right.

How and when is Learning for Life delivered across the school?
We teach Learning for Life on a weekly carousel. Sessions will run in line with the PHSE Association Programmes of Study Key Stage 3 - 5. Each week the normal timetable will be suspended for a single lesson and all students will return to their year group tutor group bases. As we move through the year we will move through the timetable so that we minimise disruption to the 'traditional' curriculum. For example Week 1 Wednesday P1, Week 2 Wednesday P2, Week 3 Wednesday P3 and so on.

Learning for Life topics will also be included in Year 9 RS and Citizenship lessons as well as topics delivered through the Performing and Visual Arts aspects of Specialism Day.

We frequently work alongside long standing professional partners who are fully trained to deliver workshops, lessons and assemblies on specific aspects of the PHSE/RSE curriculum, for example; Brook Advisory Services,Change Grow Live (Drugs and Alcohol Prevention Services), Stonewall, MIND, Tender, We Rise, Mizzen Foundation, Access Aspiration, Debate Mate, Fashion Minority Alliance, London Enterprise Agency, Talk Consent, Construction Youth Trust, Solomon Theatre Co, Cardboard Citizens, First Give, Loudmouth Productions, Discovery Programme, Mothers Against Knife Crime, My Bank. UNidosh, Arts Emergency, Mark Evison, Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge, TFL Bus Days, Social Mobility Foundation and Speakers for Schools etc

Themed Weeks
The school community focuses on a theme or topic for the day or up to a whole week - for example Show Racism the Red Card Day, Breast Cancer Awareness Day, International Day Against Homophobia/Trans/Bi Phobia, Movember, Power of Identity Week, Remembrance Day, Allyship Week, National Careers Week, Students for Sustainable Futures Week, Duke of Edinburgh Residentials and expeditions, LIFE (London Fire Brigade) Project, LGBTQ+ History Month, First Give, Global Entrepreneurship Week, African Child Trust Day, Red Nose Day, World Afro Day, Transition Weeks for Yr 11 and 13 and transition programme for Yr 6 into 7 to name but a few.

Schools, in partnership with parents, have a vital role in preparing children and young people to negotiate the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly complex world. Personal, Social, Health and Economic, Relationships and Sex Education, (PSHE/RSE) 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/RSE education helps all children and young people — the highest achievers as well as the vulnerable and excluded — to achieve their fullest potential.

Why is PSHE/RSE education so important?
PSHE/RSE education:

- 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.

What do children and young people gain from PHSE/RSE Education?
In summary, PSHE/RSE 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 wellbeing**: 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.

The knowledge, skills and attributes developed through PSHE/RSE education combine to equip pupils for numerous challenges. First aid provides a good example of this in practice. Pupils can learn the practical steps (e.g. CPR) in PSHE/RSE lessons but also develop the confidence and awareness to put this knowledge into practice and step in when faced with a real-life medical emergency.

Does PSHE/RSE get in the way of academic learning and achievement?

On the contrary, high-quality PSHE/RSE education has a positive impact on academic attainment. It effectively addresses issues, which can make it difficult for young people to engage in learning such as those concerning mental health and emotional wellbeing, bullying, poor physical health, relationship issues and substance misuse. Therefore, PSHE/RSE education complements rather than compromises core academic learning in schools. A major evidence review by Pro Bono Economics found that PSHE supported academic attainment by both removing barriers to learning and supporting pupils with the skills necessary to succeed.

Is there evidence that it works?

There is strong evidence that PSHE/RSE education:

•Supports children and young people's safety and protection - online and offline

•Supports mental and physical health and wellbeing, encouraging individual responsibility for staying fit and healthy and developing essential emergency life-saving skills

•Supports academic attainment by addressing barriers that prevent children and young people from learning

•Reduces the risks of drug and alcohol misuse and addictive behaviours

•Improves employability and chances of career success by developing the personal and social skills demanded by commerce and industry, such as communication skills, personal responsibility and confidence.

Do all schools teach PSHE/RSE education?

The DfE announced the intention to make key aspects of PSHE/RSE education mandatory in all schools from 2020. Therefore, as a key element of PSHE/RSE, relationships and sex education (RSE) is mandatory in all secondary schools, and 'relationships education' in all primary schools.' 'Health education' (covering aspects of both mental and physical health) is mandatory in state-funded schools in line with existing requirements in independent schools.

Do students build on their learning as they grow and progress through school?

Yes, like other subjects, when planned well, PSHE/RSE education gradually builds key concepts and skills through topics that are relevant to children and young people's age and stage of development.

For example:

- Learning the importance of the safe use of medicines and chemicals in the home early in primary school gradually leads to learning about the risks associated with alcohol and drug misuse later on.
- Learning the skills of fairness gradually builds to developing the skills of negotiation and assertiveness.
- Learning that as we physically grow we have new opportunities and that those opportunities bring new responsibilities. This underpins work on understanding puberty and eventually, becoming a parent.
- Learning to work cooperatively and to respect one another underpins learning that enables young people to understand and manage a wide range of different types of relationships, and understand the concept of consent
- Understanding the roles of different people in our community and how they help us underpins subsequent careers, education and choices.
- Understanding the concepts of 'borrowing and returning' and 'recognising that our actions have consequences' underpins learning about the consequences and management of debt when combined with developing numeracy skills.

As a parent, how can I support my children's PSHE/RSE education?

The personal, social, health and economic development of our children is achieved through partnership between school and the family. To support your children, you could:

- Come to information events for parents about our approach to PSHE/RSE related issues such as online safety, relationships and sex education and drugs.
- Talk with your children about the issues explored in PSHE/RSE education, we will let you know where you can find out the topics that your child is covering.

Can I withdraw my teen from Relationships and Sex Education at school?

We understand that some parents feel uncertain, and in some cases uncomfortable, with the topics covered in RSHE. Families are invited to contact the school directly with any queries or concerns. The resources used for all year groups are also available on request

You **can't** withdraw your child from any component that forms part of the Relationships Education element of RSHE, such as lessons that teach about families, friendships, general health, risky activities and how to stay safe online and offline. **However, you do have the right to withdraw your child from some or all of the sex education components within RSHE up to three terms before they turn 16** (the legal age of consent). At this point, your child can choose to receive sex education if they would like to, and the school should arrange for them to receive this teaching in one of those three terms.

*If you do **NOT** wish your child to participate in such a session, then you must contact your child's head of year in writing to express your wishes. The Head of Year will then inform the Co-Headteachers of those students not accessing this particular aspect of the Learning for Life curriculum. For the sake of clarity, there is no right to withdraw students from any component of the national science curriculum (i.e. what older people were taught in biology), such as learning about sexual organs or reproduction.*

Although there has been a great deal to digest in this letter, we hope that you will have found it helpful, you can find out further details about curriculum content and the topics that your child will be covering across all key stages on the school website under Teaching and Learning - PHSE/RSE **Learning for Life**

If you have any questions about the delivery or content of our Learning For life Programme, please email your child's form tutor in the first instance, or their Head of Year (HOY).

The Learning for Life Leads in school are:
Ms Patel Assistant Head patel.a@thenorwoodschool.org (maternity leave September 2026 - July 2027). Please contact **Mr Curtis** (curtis.j@thenorwoodschool.org) during this time.
Ms Quay HOY 7 and Learning for Life Lead quay.c@thenorwoodschool.org
Ms Morris Learning for Life Lead and teacher of Humanities morris.r@thenorwoodschool.org
Ms Serwadda Learning for Life Lead and teacher of Maths serwadda.g@thenorwoodschool.org

Thank you for taking the time to read this information,

Kind regards,

Ms Patel
Assistant Head Teacher