



Star

NURTURING TODAY'S **YOUNG PEOPLE**,  
INSPIRING TOMORROW'S **LEADERS**

# RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

Secondary setting



## Document control

<b>This document has been approved for operation within:</b>	All Trust Secondary Schools		
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## Introduction

1. This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to the Equality Act (2010); Keeping children safe in education (2019); National curriculum in England: science programmes of study (2013); Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 and the Children and Social Work Act (2017).
2. The Trust has responsibility for ensuring that pupils are appropriately educated about sex, relationships and their health in order for them to make responsible and well-informed choices in their lives.
3. The teaching of Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) helps to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life. It promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at school and in the wider society.
4. The Trust has an obligation to ensure that pupils receive high-quality, evidence-based, and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the school's RSHE and health education curriculum will be organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.
5. For the purpose of this policy, 'relationships and sex education' is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds helping them to understand human sexuality and teaching them to respect themselves and others.
6. For the purpose of this policy, 'health education' is defined as teaching pupils about how they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.
7. In all schools, teaching will reflect the religious backgrounds of all pupils. Trust schools with a faith designation will teach the distinctive faith perspective on matters relating to relationships and sex.
8. RSHE is taught within different subjects including PSHE, Science, Religious Studies, Citizenship, Computer Science / ICT and PE. Teaching of RSHE is on-going throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.
9. The Trust intends that effective RSHE teaching promotes equality between individuals and groups, fosters self-worth and encourages pupils to recognise, accept and respect differences.

## Aims

10. To develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of family life in its widest context, alongside recognition and respect for the different social, cultural, and religious backgrounds of all pupils and the communities to which they belong.
11. To provide pupils with a clear understanding of rights and responsibilities regarding equality; particularly with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act (2010).
12. To develop in pupils the skills for successful relationships (including empathy).
13. To improve confidence and self-esteem among pupils.
14. To support pupils as they grow through adolescence towards adulthood.
15. To provide factual information concerning relationships and health so that pupils are well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, while respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.
16. To develop pupils' ability to minimise personal risk and to keep themselves and other people safe.



17. To provide pupils with the opportunity to explore their own attitudes, values and beliefs and develop a moral code that will guide their actions.
18. To equip pupils with a clear understanding of the law with regard to sexual relationships and sexual behaviour (including online) as well as other social issues including substance misuse, gang exploitation, hate crime and radicalisation.
19. To help pupils develop a discerning eye for the messages they receive from the media, including social media.
20. To develop pupils' ability to access help and support for a wide range of issues.
21. To promote pupils' positive attitudes towards their own bodies and their sexuality.
22. To ensure pupils are aware of faith perspectives, particularly in schools with a faith designation.
23. To support the mission, vision and values of the Trust and its establishments.

## Who is responsible for this policy?

24. The Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory or Trust framework. The Trust has delegated the day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to Star Central, the Local Governing Body and the Principal of each Trust secondary school.
25. The Local Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team at each Trust secondary school has a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

## Content

26. RSHE is taught through discrete PSHE lessons as well as through Science and Religious Studies curriculum in a safe, comfortable, and appropriate environment. Aspects of RSHE are, on occasions, addressed through other curriculum subjects, such as Computer Science /ICT and PE.
27. The RSHE programme is continually reviewed to meet the needs of each year group. It provides:
  - Opportunities for pupils to develop skills in forming and maintaining friendships and for recognising and preventing bullying
  - Opportunities for the development of personal skills including communication, negotiation, decision making, problem solving and assertiveness
  - Opportunities for pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem
  - Information about the physical, social, and emotional aspects of puberty and adolescence
  - Information about individuals' rights and responsibilities and how these are protected by law
  - Information about the law with regard to a wide range of social issues that may impact on young people's lives
  - Opportunities to address concerns or misunderstandings
  - Opportunities for pupils to develop a respect for their own bodies and to accept variations in growth and development (social, emotional, and physical)
  - Explanations about the human biology of reproduction
  - Opportunities for pupils to develop the skills and understanding to form positive, non-exploitative relationships which also promote mutual respect and sensitivity



## Religion, belief, and schools with a faith designation

28. Schools will have a good understanding of pupils' faith backgrounds. Positive relationships between the school and local faith communities support a constructive context for the teaching of RSHE.
29. In all schools, topics and themes will be taught in a manner and at an age that is sensitive to the faith background of all pupils. All schools, regardless of whether they have a faith designation, will comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, which identifies religion or belief amongst the protected characteristics.
30. All schools may teach about faith perspectives. Trust schools with a faith designation will teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships and sex education alongside the teaching of each topic or theme. The faith perspective will be taught by a teacher who has a strong understanding of the faith perspective as well as the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
31. In all schools, teaching will reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

## Relationship and sex education

32. RSE will continue to develop pupils' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section. Teaching will continue to emphasise the STAR values, with a particular focus on respect.
33. Within the statutory curriculum content, the guidance for what pupils are taught during their time at secondary school is set out in the sections below.
34. The school may change the order of the units delivered below in consideration of the age and development of pupils. A long-term plan, outlining when each topic is taught, is available from the school upon request.
35. In schools with a faith designation in particular, all topics will be taught alongside the faith perspective. For all schools, the units would also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.

## Families

36. Pupils will learn about the characteristics and legal status of different types of committed stable relationships. They will also learn about the roles and responsibilities of parents and the characteristics of successful parenting.
37. In schools with a faith designation in particular, this topic will be taught alongside the faith perspective. For all schools, it would also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.

## Respectful relationships, including friendships

38. Pupils will learn about what healthy friendships, working relationships, intimate relationships and other committed relationships look like. They will learn how healthy relationships can benefit mental wellbeing and self-respect. They will be taught how to identify when relationships are unhealthy, recognising and responding to all types of bullying including online, as well as the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act (2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.



39. In schools with a faith designation this topic will be taught alongside the faith perspective. For all schools, it would also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.

### **Online and media**

40. Pupils will learn about their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities online, including the rules and principles for keeping safe online. They will be taught about how data is generated, collected, shared, and used online.
41. In schools with a faith designation in particular, this topic will be taught alongside the faith perspective. For all schools, it would also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.

### **Being safe**

42. Pupils will be taught about the law relating to sex, including the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault, and harassment. They will also learn the facts about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), including the physical and emotional damage it can cause, and how to access support.
43. In schools with a faith designation this topic will be taught alongside the faith perspective. For all schools, it would also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.

### **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

44. Pupils will learn that positive intimate relationships are based on mutual respect, loyalty, and trust. They will learn about consent, contraception, reproductive health, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy. They will also learn about sexuality, sexual health, and gender identity. Pupils will be taught how to keep themselves safe and understand how to get further advice if necessary, including how and where to access confidential health advice and treatment.
45. In schools with a faith designation, this topic will be taught alongside the faith perspective. For all schools, it would also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.

### **Health education**

46. The physical health and mental wellbeing curriculum will continue to develop pupils' knowledge of the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section.
47. Within the statutory curriculum content, the guidance for what pupils are taught during their time at secondary school is set out in the sections below.
48. The school may change the order of the units delivered below following consideration of the age and development of pupils. A long-term plan, outlining when each topic will be taught, is available from the school upon request.
49. In schools with a faith designation all topics will be taught alongside the faith perspective. For all schools, the units would also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.



## **Mental wellbeing**

50. Pupils will learn how to manage their own mental wellbeing positively, including through community service and physical exercise.
51. Pupils will learn how to articulate their emotions, how to recognise early signs of mental ill health, such as anxiety, and how to seek support if they are worried about themselves or others.

## **Internet safety and harms**

52. Pupils will learn about the similarities and differences between the online and physical world. They will learn about the impact of time spent online, how to recognise and respond to harmful behaviours online, how to access support, and how to negotiate social media and online forums.

## **Physical health, fitness, and healthy eating**

53. Pupils will learn about the benefits of sufficient sleep, good nutrition and physical exercise. They will be taught about the positive links between physical activity and mental wellbeing.

## **Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco**

54. Pupils will be taught factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions related to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. They will be given information about sources of support available to combat addiction.

## **Health and prevention of illness**

55. Pupils will learn about the importance of personal hygiene in the prevention of infection, good oral hygiene, positive sleep patterns, the benefits of screening and facts relating to vaccinations.

## **Basic first aid**

56. Pupils will learn basic treatments for common injuries, how to administer CPR (Cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and the purpose of defibrillators.

## **Changing adolescent body**

57. Pupils will be taught the key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing. They will be taught about the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

## **Delivery**

58. Delivery of the Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum is through:
  - Planned sessions within PSHE, Science, and Religious Studies (for faith designated schools) curricula
  - RSHE and health education complement work in several other subjects, including Computer Science / ICT and PE; where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between subjects and integrate teaching
  - A combination of regular weekly timetabled lessons, plus additional opportunities across the curriculum and enrichment activities, complemented by 'drop down' days and special guest speakers where appropriate
  - A variety of teaching and learning styles which may involve the use of, for example: DVDs, drama and scenarios, individual/paired/group work or discussion techniques such as mind mapping and quizzes





- Distancing and de-personalising techniques such as 'ask-it baskets' where questions can be asked anonymously
59. Teaching of the curriculum will reflect requirements set out in law, particularly in the Equality Act (2010), so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.
  60. RSHE will be delivered confidently by staff who generate an atmosphere where questions can be asked and answered openly without embarrassment and where ground rules of trust and confidentiality are agreed.
  61. The school will integrate LGBT content into the RSHE curriculum: this content will be taught as part of the overall curriculum, rather than a standalone topic or lesson. LGBT content will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate, and factual way. In schools with a faith designation LGBT content will be taught alongside the faith perspective in Religious Studies lessons. For all schools, it will also be taught at an age that is appropriate for the pupil and wider community they serve.
  62. All teaching and resources will be assessed to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any pupils with SEND.
  63. Teaching about the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act (2010) will be focused on pupils' development of respect for those different to themselves.
  64. Relevant visitors (specialist professionals) may, from time to time, be invited to deliver sessions which enrich the RSHE programme. Any such sessions will be carefully planned, and visitors must abide by this policy.
  65. The monitoring of teaching and learning in RSHE is rigorous. Subject reviews, self-evaluation and improvement planning are well informed by best practice. Assessment of RSHE is conducted through the monitoring and observation of pupils learning with reference to :
    - Knowledge and skills developed
    - Attitudes and values explored
    - Responses offered by pupils

## **Staff development and training**

66. The school recognises that, in order to properly implement and maintain this policy, there is a requirement to ensure that key staff have the opportunity to access appropriate and relevant training and development opportunities when required.

## **Disclosures**

67. In some cases, a question/comment may indicate a pupil to be at risk or in danger, in which case appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Trust Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy based on the 'Keeping children safe in education: for schools and colleges' statutory guidance.



## Confidentiality

68. If a pupil poses a private question to a teacher or other member of staff and requests secrecy, no promise of secrecy or confidentiality will be given, but the pupil will be reassured that any steps taken will always be in their best interest.

## Sensitive issues

69. Staff involved with RSHE at the school understand that the subject can be challenging. They will provide pupils with suitable, accurate information matched to their age and to their stage of physical and emotional development.
70. Staff accept that some questions may require further consideration and as such do not have to be answered directly or immediately. The teacher/specialist/adult will always make a considered decision. They may return to questions later with the whole class, individually, or decide to refer the question to parents.
71. All staff will use their professional skills and discretion when sensitive matters arise and always keep in mind the age and maturity of the pupil.

## Parental involvement

72. The Trust and the school believe that parents/carers have a fundamental role in educating their children about relationships, sex and health education. The Trust aims to build a positive and supportive relationship with parents through mutual trust and co-operation.
73. Parents/carers are informed about this policy and practice to reinforce the school's promotion of strong and mutually supportive relationships.
74. Parents/carers from across Trust schools were consulted on the content of this policy.
75. The Trust consults with stakeholders about the review of this policy, making modifications where necessary, and takes seriously any issues parents may raise about this policy.
76. The arrangements for withdrawal of pupils from RSHE lessons are as follows:
- Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE
  - Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programmes
  - Requests to withdraw a child from sex education must be made in writing to the Principal
  - Before granting a withdrawal request, the Principal, or a senior leader authorised by the Principal, will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the child, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum
  - The Principal will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving sex education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have
  - All discussions with parents will be documented and kept securely in the pupil's file
77. Following discussions with parents, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child for up to three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education teaching rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education.
78. Pupils who are withdrawn from sex education lessons will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal.



79. For requests concerning the withdrawal of a pupil with SEND, the Principal may take the pupil's specific needs into account when making their decision.