

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

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Owner	RHSE Lead			
Date	Version	Reason for change	Overview of changes made	Source
29.09.20	0.1	Scheduled Review	Logo and name updated. J Bowman	
02.10.20	0.2	Scheduled Internal Lead review.	Right to withdraw updated for Year 5/6. M Lambert	DfE
03.11.20	0.3	Scheduled Board Lead review	No changes made. H Bowman	
20.11.20	1.0	Scheduled Board Review	Ratified by Board	
31.08.21	1.1	Scheduled Internal Lead review -	No changes. J Wynn	
03.09.21	1.2	Scheduled Board Lead review	No changes. H Bowman	
17.09.21	2.0	Scheduled Board Review	Ratified by Board	
14.09.22	2.1	Scheduled Internal Lead Review -	No changes. M Lambert	

15.09.22	2.2	Scheduled Board Lead review	No changes. H Bowman	
30.09.22	3.0	Scheduled Board Review	Ratified by Board	
12.09.23	3.1	Scheduled Internal Lead review.	No changes. J Wynn	
19.09.23	3.2	Scheduled Board Lead review	No changes. C Gethin	
29.09.23	4.0	Scheduled Board Review	Ratified by Board	
01.10.24	4.1	Legislative changes	Changes made in line with DfE. E Bowring	DfE
09.10.24	4.2	Board Lead review.	No changes. J Wynn	
13.12.24	5.0	Board Review	Amends to leading statements in introduction. A Burns Ratified by Board following changes	
17.09.25	5.1	Scheduled Internal Lead review.	No changes. J Wynn	
24.09.25	5.2	Scheduled Board Lead review.	No changes. C Gethin	
03.10.25	6.0	Scheduled Board Review	Ratified by Board	
03.03.26	6.1	Legislative change	Comprehensive update for compliance with July 2025 Statutory Guidance ready for 2026. C Gethin	DfE
08.05.26	7	Scheduled Board Review	Ratified by Board	
12.05.26	7	Internal Update	Updated with annual consent and access to materials.	

1. Introduction and Statutory Framework

The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust (TSSMAT) is committed to providing a high-quality, evidence-based curriculum for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE). This policy has been developed in accordance with the "Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education" statutory guidance (July 2025) for full implementation in September 2026.

The Trust fulfills its legal obligations under the following statutory instruments:

- **Section 80A of the Education Act 2002** and **Section 403 of the Education Act 1996**, which require schools to have regard to statutory guidance.
- **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, which make these subjects compulsory.

RSHE is delivered as an integrated component of the Trust's Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) Citizenship, and Science curriculum. Our objective is to equip pupils with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed and ethical decisions regarding their wellbeing, health, and relationships.

2. Policy Aims and Objectives

TSSMAT provides an RSHE curriculum that is positive, age-appropriate, and legally compliant. The key aims are:

- **Legislative Compliance:** To meet all duties regarding statutory provision and parental rights.
- **Developmental Support:** To guide pupils through physical, emotional, and moral development while building confidence in discussing feelings.
- **Self-Respect and Respect for Others:** To foster a strong sense of identity and facilitate the transition from childhood to adulthood.
- **Biological Literacy:** To teach pupils to name body parts correctly and understand human lifecycles and puberty.
- **Prevention of Harms:** To support pupils in identifying "when things are not right," understanding boundaries, and developing strategies to avoid risks before they occur.
- **Character Development:** To actively cultivate the following eight positive character traits: **resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness.**

3. Parental Engagement and Transparency

The Trust operates a policy of total transparency. Parents are the primary educators of their children, and the Trust seeks to work in partnership with them.

- **Annual Consent:** In accordance with established Trust practice, parents are asked to provide consent for the teaching of specific RHSE modules on an annual basis.
- **Access to Materials:** All curriculum materials, including lesson plans and resources, are available for parental inspection upon request. Materials may be shared via a secure "parent portal" or school presentations.

Contractual Integrity and Public Interest:

- **Conditions of Access:** Parents must agree, as a condition of accessing curriculum resources, not to further distribute, copy, or download copyrighted materials except as authorised under copyright law.
- **Consultation:** The Trust will proactively consult parents during the review of this policy or when making significant changes to RSHE modules.

4. Right to Withdraw from Sex Education

Parents have the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of "sex education" delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Primary School Provision (September 2026): For any sex education taught in primary schools outside of the Statutory Science Curriculum, Head Teachers must automatically grant any parental request for withdrawal. Parents cannot withdraw children from content that is taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science.

- **Non-Withdrawable Content:** Parents **cannot** withdraw children from:
 1. Relationships Education (e.g. families, friendships, being safe).
 2. Health Education (e.g., mental wellbeing, physical health).
 3. Statutory Science Curriculum (including the biological aspects of puberty, reproduction, and the human lifecycle).
- **Withdrawal Protocol:** Requests should be made to the Head Teacher. The school will document the request and ensure the pupil receives "purposeful education" in a supervised setting during the period of withdrawal.

5. Curriculum Content: Relationships and Online Safety

The primary curriculum focuses on the fundamental building blocks of positive, respectful relationships and safety in both physical and digital spaces.

Theme	Key Topics	Specific 2026 Updates
Families & Friendships	Safe/stable family characteristics; marriage and civil partnerships; commitment; managing conflict without violence.	Identifying unsafe family relationships; respecting diverse forms (single parents, same-sex parents, kinship carers, young carers, foster parents).
Respectful Relationships	Boundaries and privacy; courtesy/manners; different types of bullying; identifying stereotypes.	Challenging misogyny, gender stereotypes, and unfair prejudice. Distinguishing between being assertive and being controlling.
Online Safety & Risks	Respectful online interaction; anonymity risks; sharing personal information; identifying harmful contact.	AI risks (chatbots/fake intimacy); deepfakes (identification and harms); and legal ramifications of AI-generated sexual imagery.
Internet Awareness	Critically evaluating sources; privacy/location settings; "Report Remove" service for imagery.	Understanding age restrictions (e.g., age 13 for social media); the law regarding youth-produced sexual imagery and sextortion.

6. Curriculum Content: Health and Physical Wellbeing

Health education empowers pupils to manage their own wellbeing and recognise the need for professional support.

- **Physical Health:** Focus on active lifestyles and healthy eating.
- **Dental Health:** Mandatory teaching on the importance of brushing twice daily with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and the necessity of regular check-ups at the dentist.

- **Sleep and Screen Use:** Teaching the importance of sleep for mood and learning, and the negative impact of electronic screens in the bedroom.
- **Vaping and Nicotine:** Facts regarding the risks of nicotine addiction, including specific focuses on vaping and nicotine patches.
- **Menstruation:** Pupils will be taught the facts of the menstrual cycle. Staff must exclusively use the terms "period products" or "menstrual products" (avoiding "sanitary" or "hygiene" prefixes). The Trust utilises the DfE Period Products Scheme.
- **Developing Bodies:** As part of safeguarding, pupils will be taught correct anatomical terminology, including penis, vulva, vagina, clitoris, testicles, scrotum, and nipples.

7. Teaching and Learning Delivery

RSHE is delivered by trained staff within a safe, supportive environment using evidence-based resources.

- **Managing Inquiries:** Teachers will answer questions sensitively and age-appropriately. Questions that fall outside the planned curriculum or relate to sex education from which a child has been withdrawn will be referred back to parents.
- **School Nurse Involvement:** In accordance with Trust practice, the School Nurse may assist class teachers in delivering specific Year 6 modules (e.g., menstruation and puberty) to ensure clinical accuracy and specialised support.
- **Pedagogical Techniques:** Staff utilise "distancing techniques" and "question boxes" to manage sensitive discussions and allow for anonymous pupil inquiries.
- **Groupings:** While the curriculum is generally co-educational, the Trust provides separate sessions for Year 5/6 girls regarding menstruation to facilitate more in-depth discussion.

8. Social Inclusion, Equality, and SEND

The Trust complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- **SEND Accessibility:** RSHE is adapted to meet the specific needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), who may be more vulnerable to exploitation or bullying.
- **Diverse Representation:** The curriculum represents diverse family structures, including single parents, same-sex parents, foster parents, kinship carers, young carers, and families headed by grandparents or adoptive parents.
- **Equality:** Staff will actively identify and tackle everyday sexism, misogyny, and stereotypes to build a culture of mutual respect.

9. Safeguarding and Child Protection

RSHE is a vital tool for safeguarding and is linked directly to "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSIE).

- **Non-Confidentiality:** Staff cannot promise confidentiality if a disclosure suggests a child is at risk of abuse, neglect, or harm (including domestic abuse).
- **DSL Role:** Any concern or disclosure must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- **Victim Support:** Teaching emphasises that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually by the RHSE Lead and the Board of Directors. The curriculum is subject to ongoing evaluation to ensure it remains responsive to local needs and statutory updates. Any major changes to RSHE modules or external resources must be shared with parents and Directors before delivery.

All materials will be shared formally on an annual basis and any materials can be accessed on your school website and can be viewed fully on request.