



RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY – Updated for 2025/26 Guidance

Policy Development

This policy has been developed by the Assistant Principal, Hannah Griffiths, and reviewed by the Principal, Mike Marshall. It has been created in consultation with staff, trustees, parents, and pupils in line with DfE statutory guidance for RSE (2020) and the updated RSHE guidance due to take effect September 2026.

We are committed to delivering relationships and sex education that is inclusive, age-appropriate and sensitive to the individual needs of our pupils. Our approach supports pupils to develop understanding, respect and confidence in relationships while promoting safety, wellbeing and personal dignity.

Our approach to RSE is guided by our core values:

Belong – We create a safe and respectful learning environment where pupils feel accepted, valued and able to discuss relationships, feelings and questions without fear of judgement.

Commit – We are committed to delivering high-quality, carefully planned RSE in line with statutory guidance, working in partnership with families and professionals.

Thrive – By developing pupils' knowledge, emotional understanding and self-advocacy, we enable them to make informed, safe and respectful choices now and in the future.

RSE is delivered in a way that is autism-informed, inclusive and protective, with a strong focus on consent, healthy relationships and safeguarding, ensuring pupils are supported to grow and develop safely.

Intent

The PSHCE/RSE curriculum is an inclusive and responsive curriculum, enabling all pupils to Belong, Commit and Thrive as confident learners and prepare pupils for life by equipping them with a combination of knowledge, skills, and attributes that go beyond academic results, allowing them to navigate adult life safely and successfully.

TPA aims for RSHE to:

- Provide a safe and inclusive environment for sensitive discussions.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, sexual development, and personal hygiene.
- Promote positive relationships, consent, and respect, including online and in-person.
- Teach pupils correct vocabulary to describe their bodies, feelings, and experiences.
- Deliver knowledge in an accessible, differentiated way for SEN/D learners.
- Support pupils to be safe, confident, and prepared for adult life.

- Align with policies on safeguarding, equality, anti-bullying, and diversity.
- Integrate with TPA's pastoral care and broader school ethos

Statutory Requirements

DfE Statutory Guidance states that from September 2020 all schools must deliver relationships and sex education. The teaching of RSE is in line with the Equality Act, 2010 and also Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025.

As an independent school, we must provide relationship education to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act, 2017](#).

The updated RSHE guidance (2025/26) introduces additional requirements, including:

- Awareness of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and misogyny.
- Online safety and sexual harms, including sexting, pornography, deepfakes, and online exploitation.
- Everyday personal safety, both online and offline.
- Skills-based learning: decision-making, resilience, critical thinking, assertive communication.

We still follow the National Curriculum and offer all pupils a curriculum that embeds the teaching for the National Curriculum requirements for science into RSE lessons. This includes the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we're required by our trustees to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At Turning Point Academy, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review of national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation on draft policy.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation meetings.
4. Pupil consultation regarding learning needs.
5. Ratification by trustees.

Definition

RSHE supports the emotional, social, spiritual, and cultural development of pupils, covering:

- Relationships
- Sexual health and behaviour
- Healthy lifestyles
- Personal identity and diversity
- Rights, responsibilities, and values

RSHE **does not promote sexual activity.**

Implementation

The RSHE curriculum at Turning Point Academy (see Appendix 1) is fully integrated into our PSHE curriculum, with pupils receiving two lessons per week and complementary content taught through subjects such as science and RE. Teaching is personalised, starting from pupils' existing knowledge and understanding, and is adapted to meet individual needs, including those of SEN/D learners. Additional support and alternative approaches are provided for pupils who find the content challenging or overwhelming.

The curriculum has been developed in consultation with parents, pupils, and staff, considering pupils' age, developmental stage, and wellbeing. Teachers respond to questions appropriately, ensuring pupils are fully informed and do not need to seek answers online.

RSHE at TPA promotes safe, healthy, and nurturing relationships across a range of contexts, including families, friendships, romantic or intimate relationships, and online interactions. Lessons reinforce the importance of equality, respect, and protected characteristics, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and statutory guidance, and are integrated with British Values to support pupils' social, emotional, and moral development.

Our RSE teaching provides pupils with the information they require to enable them to develop safe, healthy, nurturing relationships in a range of contexts including families, friendships, romantic and intimate relationships and relationships with people online.

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Roles and Responsibilities

At Turning Point Academy, RSE is taught in class groups by familiar teachers. We may alter class groupings where it is appropriate in order to make sure pupils are more comfortable with the specific teaching.

Staff:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive and inclusive way
- Establishing the ground rules before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature so that staff and students can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or breach of confidentiality
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE and reinforce equality, consent, and respect.
- The emphasis of teaching RSE will always be about the importance of understanding personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices
- Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the sex education components of RSE
- Where a student has embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the student is sure of the implication of their behaviour. The member of staff must refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Engage in professional development via PSHE Association and INSET.

Pupils:

Pupils are expected to fully engage in RSE lessons and when discussing RSE issues and information they should treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents/Carers:

TPA recognise the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding of relationships. Parents and carers are the first educators of their children and have the most influence in enabling children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. All parents and carers will be:

- Consulted on curriculum and informed about content.
- Able to raise concerns or discuss withdrawal.
- Encouraged to participate in the development of RSE

Parental Right to Withdraw

Parents/ Carers have the right to withdraw their children from the sex education components within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

On admission to Turning Point Academy, our admission form asks for parent/ carer permission to teach each child sex education. Each year, we will remind parents when RSE is taught and advise them of the content covered. Parents/ carers can

therefore contact their child's class teacher if they have any concerns or wish to withdraw their child.

Before granting any request there will be an invitation to meet with the Principal to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Schools will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. **There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education and Health Education or Sex Education within the science National Curriculum.** (section 4 – Relationships, Sex and Relationships and Health Guidance: DfE, 2020).

Topics for potential withdrawal:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Impact and Assessment

Our curriculum effectiveness is reviewed through pupil progress, the process of subject leadership, work scrutiny, staff reflection and pupil voice on a termly basis. Pupil progress and attainment is assessed in line with our PSHCE assessment and against objective statements detailed within our assessment tracking system. Progress and attainment will be reported to parents/carers on our termly progress reports to parents/ carers.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by staff and Trustees annually in the Autumn Term. The teaching of RSE is monitored by Hannah Griffiths, lead for PSHE & RSE at Turning Point Academy and Claire Hand, the lead for the Life Curriculum at TPA.

The policy will be reviewed annually in Autumn Term.

Appendix 1

TPA RSHE Curriculum (to be integrated into PSHE curriculum)

KEY STAGE 2

We begin with an assessment of children's current knowledge and understanding regarding body parts and changes as they get older. We will explore different relationships and discuss what makes those relationships positive and healthy.

Year 3	Qualities of a family and friend Personal boundaries Respectful and hurtful behaviour Making healthy choices Introduction to online safety
Year 4	Positive/healthy friendships, including online interactions Respect and empathy Physical and emotional changes in puberty Recognising and feeling emotions Introduction to gender identity and diversity
Year 5	Managing friendships and influences Physical contact Changes in puberty Sexual reproduction (science National Curriculum) FGM awareness Online safety and risks of harmful content
Year 6	Attraction and early romantic feelings Marriage and civil partnership Introducing consent and healthy boundaries Human reproduction and pregnancy Personal safety and recognising unsafe situations

KEY STAGE 3

Again, we begin with a thorough assessment of the pupils' current knowledge and understanding regarding RSE. Where we identify gaps, we will use the KS2 content to ensure pupils are taught what they do not know.

Year 7	Puberty & Emotional changes of puberty Menstruation and bodily hygiene Building healthy relationships Relationship values Consent, peer pressure and online risks FGM and safeguarding
Year 8	Sexual orientation and gender identity Relationship values and empathy The law and consent The risks of sexting and sharing images Basic forms of contraception and reproductive health Recognising online harms and misinformation
Year 9	Different forms of families Conflict resolution and managing disagreement Myths and misconceptions around sexual activity Consent and assertive communication STIs Contraception Pornography, body image and media influences The risk of sharing sexual images Online safety, social media and peer pressure

KEY STAGE 4

Again, we begin with a thorough assessment of the pupils' current knowledge and understanding regarding RSE. Where we identify gaps, we will use the KS3 content to ensure pupils are taught what they do not know.

Year 10	Relationship values and healthy intimacy Pleasure, consent, manipulation, and coercion Myths about social norms, gender, and sexuality Media, pornography, and online safety
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	<p>Victim blaming and respecting boundaries</p> <p>Abstinence, asexuality, and celibacy options</p>
Year 11	<p>Gender identity, expression, and sexual orientation</p> <p>Assertive communication and negotiation skills</p> <p>Relationship challenges, abuse, and unhealthy dynamics</p> <p>Accessing support and safeguarding resources</p> <p>Fertility, pregnancy, and contraception choices</p> <p>Readiness for parenthood</p> <p>Adoption, fostering, honour-based violence, and forced marriage</p>

Appendix 2

Protected Characteristics

Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their:

Equality Act 2010

Protected Characteristics

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their:



AGE



DISABILITY



SEX



MARRIAGE AND
CIVIL PARTNERSHIP



RACE



PREGNANCY
AND MATERNITY



SEXUAL
ORIENTATION



RELIGION OR
BELIEF



GENDER
REASSIGNMENT



Safe Schools Alliance UK
Putting Safeguarding First

