

Relationship, Health, and Sex Education (RHSE) Policy

Approved by	FGB	Date	July 2026
Last reviewed on	July 2024		
Next review due by	July 2027		

1. Aims

Our school's approach to RSHE seeks to be faith sensitive and inclusive. It is underpinned by our school values and vision that we believe that each member of our school community is created by God and our aim is to achieve our full potential (being **fully alive**). All we do is rooted in this **hope** of who we are as people and who we can become. We are particularly inspired by **Jesus'** statement 'I have come that you might have life and life in all its fullness' (John 10 v10) and Irenaeus' 'the glory of God is a human being fully alive'.

At SMRT, everyone will be treated with dignity as all people are made in the image of God and are loved equally by God. Our teaching of RSHE will be taught through the lens of our ALIVE values, recognizing that all students have a right to an education which enables them to flourish and is set in a learning community where differences of lifestyle and opinion are treated with dignity and respect.

Our school seeks to ensure that the RSHE curriculum protects, informs and nurtures all students. It clearly differentiates between factual teaching (biology, medicine, the law, marriage, different types of families) and moral teaching about relationships and values.

RSHE teaching at SMRT will follow the five national guiding principles of RHSE to incorporate: engagement with students, engagement and transparency with parents/carers, positivity, careful sequencing, a relevant and responsive approach, skilled delivery through appropriate professional development and a whole school approach.

At SMRT we will:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare students for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Help students realise the importance of their own health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity.
- Provide understanding of family structures, committed relationships and the legal status of different types of long-term relationships.
- Help students understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them.
- Help students to manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions.
- Enable students to consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others.
- Develop students to be informed and responsible citizens.
- Enable students to understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.
- Promote online safety and awareness including the risk factors of AI and online financial exploitation.
- Avoid language and activities which repeat or reinforce gender stereotypes.

2. Statutory Requirements

As a Voluntary Aided secondary school, we must provide RHSE to all students under the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RHSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our 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 SMRT, we teach RHSE as set out in this Policy.

3. Policy Development

This Policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents/carers. The consultation and Policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the Policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the Policy.
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their VIP lessons.
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the Policy was shared with governors and ratified.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships.

4. Definitions

RHSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity, and personal identity.

RHSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RHSE is **not** about the promotion of sexual activity.

Defining Relationships Education

We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life.

Defining Sex Education

We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal, and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections, and sexual health.

Defining Health Education

Health education is learning about physical health and mental wellbeing so that students can make wise choices to ensure their own flourishing and that of others.

5. Curriculum

Our RHSE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we will adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum as a spiral curriculum, in consultation with parents/carers, students and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this Policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

As young people's use of online media increases with age, students may turn to social media to explore issues. The RSHE curriculum aims to educate and equip young people with the skills to critically evaluate the information they are presented with online. Moreover, students will be taught strategies to recognise and respond to online bullying, inappropriate AI generated images/content, hate speech, extremist views or radicalisation in different online contexts and how to report online malicious communication. As required by [national guidance](#) we will explain to students that keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Students should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Students should know how to seek support and should understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared. Students should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime.

In Year 12 and 13, students come from a range of secondary schools, but the assumption is made that a comparable programme has been followed in their previous school. Students in Sixth Form address age-appropriate issues with a particular focus on consent and abuse within relationships, recognising and respecting diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity and with signposting towards appropriate support services in wider areas of sexual health.

We share all curriculum topics with parents and carers termly and can provide teaching materials used on request.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

6. Delivery of RHSE

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

RHSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families.
- Wellbeing
- Staying healthy
- Respectful kind relationships, including friendships.
- Online safety and awareness.
- Being safe.
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.
- For more information about our RHSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

RSHE will be delivered as part of the ViP (Values in Practice) curriculum and through the pastoral, core, and assembly programme within Years 7-11 as well as in the Sixth Form. RSHE will be delivered in a way that affords dignity and shows respect to all who make up our diverse community. It will not discriminate against any of the protected characteristics in the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) and will be sensitive to all faiths and beliefs in the wider school community. It will value the importance of faithfulness as the underpinning and backdrop for relationships. It will encourage students to develop the skills needed to disagree without being disagreeable, to appreciate the lived experience of other people, and to live well together.

We will ensure that RHSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our students, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEND) through the distribution of resources to LSAs and Learning Mentors to offer extra support where required.

We will create a safe learning environment to help students share feelings, explore values and attitudes, express opinions and consider those of others, without attracting negative feedback. This will allow students to engage more objectively with the lesson content.

Teachers are aware that effective RHSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. In this instance, teachers will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to report any concerns and ensure the welfare of the student is protected.

Some elements will be taught through the Pastoral Curriculum and off-timetable events, with the help of external agencies and speakers. The school has had a successful relationship with outside agencies over a number of years. These agencies complement the school's programme and put on workshops only after approval from key school staff.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can

include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism, or the illegal use of drugs.

At SMRT, we teach RHSE as a spiral curriculum, building on topics year on year. Here is brief overview of some of the topics covered each year for further details on the topics covered each year, parents/carers can contact the Values in Practice (ViP) Coordinator.

Key Stage 3

Year 7 – Healthy relationships, healthy bodies and mental health and a healthy community. Staying safe online.

Year 8 – The legal, social and emotional consequences of risky situations in relationships. Supporting mental health and careers and finance.

Year 9 – The importance of building safe relationships and staying safe online. Understanding diversity and discrimination

Key Stage 4

Year 10 – Taking responsibility for our own mental, emotional and physical wellbeing in relationships, personal finance and substance abuse.

Year 11 – Being proactive in maintaining good physical health and positive healthy relationships in the context of different types of families. Sexual harassment and misogyny and recognising risks and misinformation online.

For a full overview of learning outcomes required of secondary schools by the end of Year 11, please see pages 12 to 32 in the Government's [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#) document.

Key Stage 5

Year 12 and 13 – The majority of students are from other schools, but the assumption is made that a comparable programme has been followed in their previous school. Students in Sixth Form address age-appropriate issues with a particular focus on consent and abuse within relationships, recognising and respecting diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity and with signposting towards appropriate support services in wider areas of sexual health

Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all students' experiences
- During lessons, makes students feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them and give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed.

Use of Resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RHSE guidance.
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings.
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students.
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics.
- Fit into our curriculum plan.
- Are from credible sources.
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches.
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and will not provoke distress.

7. Use of External Organisations and Materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RHSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age appropriate.
 - Are in line with students' developmental stage.
 - Comply with:
 - This Policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses.
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum.
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with.
- Be clear on:
 - What they are going to say.
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed.
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use.

- Know the named individuals who will be there and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people.
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents/ carers.
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session.
- Remind teachers that they can say 'no' or, in extreme cases, stop a session.
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers.
- Share all external materials with parents/carers.

We **will not**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions.
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing board will approve the RHSE Policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RHSE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing resources and materials with parents/carers, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RHSE (see section 9) working with the Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RHSE in a sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RHSE.
- Monitoring progress.
- Responding to the needs of individual students.
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RHSE.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RHSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RHSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Development and implementation of the RSHE programme in ViP will be coordinated by the ViP Coordinator, with support and oversight from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Members of staff delivering the RSHE programme will have a sound knowledge of sex and relationship issues and will be confident in their skills to teach sex education and discuss sex and relationships.

Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RHSE and, when discussing issues related to RHSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents'/Carers' Right to Withdraw

Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RHSE up to a year before the child turns 16. After this point, if the student wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing via email and addressed to Head@smrt.bristol.sch.uk.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed on the student's educational record. The SLT Link for VIP will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

Alternative schoolwork will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RHSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

School leaders will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RHSE.

11. Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RHSE is monitored by the Head of VIP. Students' development in RHSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This Policy will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead annually. At every review, the Policy will be approved by the Headteacher and the Governing Body.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been assessed for its impact on equality and does not unlawfully discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the [Equality Act 2010](#).

In developing and implementing this policy, the school has given due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all members of the school community, taking account of individual needs and circumstances where appropriate.

The Governing Board and Headteacher will monitor the implementation and impact of this policy to ensure it remains compliant with equality legislation and supports the school's commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equal opportunity.

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map

Relationships Health and Sex Education Curriculum Map

Key Stage 3

	Y7	Y8	Y9
Term 1	Community: belonging and extremism 1. Developing learning skills 2. Setting goals 3. Friendship and empathy 4. Bullying and bystanders 5. Friendship challenges	Careers and finance 1. Jobs 2. Minimum wage and apprenticeships 3. Bank accounts	Justice 1. Cybercrime 2. AI and financial exploitation 3. Drugs and the law
Term 2	Healthy Self 1. Sleep 2. Vaping 3. Dental health	Finance 1. Fraud 2. Gaming and financial risk 3. Budgeting	Keeping safe online 1. Protecting personal information online 2. Managing devices and accounts 3. Identifying scams and seeking support 4. Politics in England
Term 3	Healthy Self continued 1. Medicine safety and self-care for minor ailments 2. Legal and illegal drugs 3. Resisting pressure to drugs	Mental health 1. Emotional wellbeing 2. Resilience and failure 3. Depression and anxiety	Careers and choosing GCSE options 1. Exploring career interests 2. Work patterns and workplaces 3. Managing pressure and seeking support 4. Preparing for KS4 options
Term 4	Healthy self, continued 1. Vaping 2. Grief	Mental health, continued 1. Eating disorders 2. Self-harm	Diversity and discrimination 1. What is hate crime? 2. Ableism 3. Neurodiversity
Term 5	Relationships 1. Puberty 2. Types of relationships 3. Roles and responsibilities within families	Sex and relationships 1. Introduction to consent 2. Sharing nudes 3. Sexual harassment 4. Deepfakes	Sex and relationships 1. Healthy relationships 2. Online sexual harassment and personal safety 3. Dangers of pornography 4. Consent 5. Teen pregnancy

Term 6	Relationships continued 1. Consent 2. Sexual harassment 3. Hurtful behaviours 4. Healthy online friendships	Drugs 1. Caffeine 2. Tobacco 3. Alcohol	Drugs 1. Attitudes to drugs 2. Alcohol and cannabis 3. Drugs and the law 4. Managing influence
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Key Stage 4

	Y10	Y11
Term 1	Mental health 1. Transitions and mental health 2. Reframing negative thinking 3. Recognising mental ill health 4. Emotional wellbeing 5. Sleep and wellbeing 6. Unconscious bias and microaggressions 7. Accent bias and discrimination	The next move life post Y11 1. Identifying career preferences 2. Navigating the careers landscape 3. Mapping a career path (post-16 options) 4. Making a good first impression at interviews 5. Reflecting on work experience
Term 2	Personal finance 1. Gambling 2. Debt 3. Homelessness 4. Saving, borrowing and protecting money from fraud 5. Insurance 6. Pay slips	Keeping healthy and happy 1. Organ donation 2. Fertility 3. Pregnancy options 4. Abortion 5. Self-examination for breast and testicular cancer, skin cancer risks 6. Laws on tattoos and piercings 7. Cosmetic procedures and sunbeds
Term 3	Relationships 1. Consent 2. Pornography 3. Coercion and consent 4. STIs 5. HIV 6. Forced marriage	Sexual harassment and identities 1. Harassment and misogyny (Adolescence) 2. Feminism 3. Intersectionality 4. Coercive control 5. Coping strategies for good mental health

Term 4	Relationships, continued 1. Marriage and civil partnerships 2. Parenting 3. Loss and bereavement	Living in the wider world 1. Voting 2. Fake news 3. Extremism 4. Serious organised crime
Term 5	Drugs 1. County lines 2. Substances and risk 3. Managing influence	
Term 6	Drugs continued 1. Addiction and sources of support 2. Festival drugs	