New Road Academy Relationships, Sex and Health education (RSHE) policy

Approved Policy by	Standards Committee
Last reviewed	Autumn 2026
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Purpose and Scope

Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) across the Learning Community Trust is rooted in our shared values and vision for developing compassionate, resilient, and inspirational young people. The RSHE curriculum aligns with the Trust's commitment to Respect for All, promoting equality, diversity, and inclusivity through open, sensitive discussion and the development of empathy and self-respect. As A Trust With Heart we place our young people's wellbeing at the centre, helping them understand their development in a caring, supportive environment.

In preparing young people for puberty and relationships, RSE encourages Coping With The Challenges of Life, fostering resilience and confidence to navigate an ever-changing world. Our approach supports young people to create positive attitudes towards their identity and relationships.

We work to ensure No Child is Left Behind, providing every young person with the understanding they need to achieve safe and healthy relationships, regardless of background or starting point.

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSHE) in our Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare young people for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help young people develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach young people the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

The Trust ensures that all RSHE content is carefully sequenced and age-appropriate, avoiding the introduction of explicit content before it is developmentally appropriate, in line with current DfE expectations."

Statutory requirements and links to other policies

In our primary academies, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This legislation also requires us to provide RSHE to all students at our secondary academies.

We offer all pupils a curriculum that is aligned to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science. This includes the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum at primary level.

In teaching RSHE, we're required by our funding agreements 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 Learning Community Trust we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy
- Online Safety or ICT Policy

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, young people and parents/carers.

The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or a working group of staff from each Academy/central Trust education team pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – staff across all academies 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 at their respective academies
4. Young people consultation – we investigated exactly what young people want from their RSHE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the Board of Trustees for ratification

Definition

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

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is set out as per the Appendix but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents/carers, young people and staff, taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our young people. If young people ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that all young people are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will proactively inform parents and carers about RSHE curriculum content. Curriculum resources and materials will also be shared on request.

Primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

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

Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is delivered consistently across the Trust through a planned PSHE curriculum, supported by science and, where appropriate, RE. Individual academies contextualise delivery to meet the needs of their pupils while maintaining fidelity to the Trust's curriculum principles.

During year 9 students at New Road Academy receive specific sex education lessons that support their knowledge of STI's and methods of contraception.
For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.
At New Road Academy, RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of young people based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, 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 ensure teaching remains balanced and does not promote partisan political views or present contested opinions as fact, in line with statutory guidance on political impartiality.
Adaptations will maintain alignment with statutory expectations while ensuring accessibility for all learners

Inclusivity

Our academies will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of young people, including those with SEND, will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all young people's experiences
- During lessons, makes young people feel safe and supported
- Able to engage with the key messages

They will also:

- Make sure that young people learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
- A whole class setting
  - Small groups or targeted sessions
  - 1-to-1 discussions
  - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

Use of resources

Our academies will consider whether any resources they plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance
- Would support young people in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our young people
- 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 young people's experiences and won't provoke distress

Use of external organisations and materials

Across our Trust, we will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality, and are appropriate in terms of safeguarding, accuracy, and educational value

We remain responsible for what is said to young people. 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.

Our academies **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSHE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with young people's 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 they 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're 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 usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to the Academy, or to parents and 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 any external materials with parents and carers

Our academies **won't**, 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

Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

The Trust Board has delegated the approval of this policy to Standards committee who approve the RSHE policy and hold the Executive to account for its implementation across the Trust.

Local governing bodies

Local governing bodies are responsible for holding the headteacher/Principal to account for its implementation at their school and reporting issues to the Education Director if they occur.

The headteacher/Principal

The headteacher/Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across their school, for making sure that resources and materials are shared with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual young people
- Responding appropriately to young people whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher/Principal.

All form tutors are expected to deliver RSHE as part of their duties within the school.

Young People

Young People are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents' right to withdraw

For primary-aged pupils, parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher/Principal of the Academy.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

For secondary-aged students, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the Academy will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher/Principal of the Academy.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the young person's educational record. The headteacher/Principal will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.
Alternative work will be given to young people who are withdrawn from sex education.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE which is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher/Principal will also invite visitors from outside the Academy, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored at Academy level through curriculum review, lesson visits, pupil voice, and safeguarding processes.

At Trust level, monitoring includes periodic reviews of curriculum implementation, safeguarding audits, and analysis of pupil data to ensure consistency and effectiveness across all academies

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust's Director of Education every 3 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the resources committee

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

Relationships and sex education curriculum map

This policy table records the topics shown on the New Road Academy PSHE Curriculum Map 2026/27 for Years 7 to 11. Wider PSHE content is labelled separately. The map does not list lesson resources.

Year 7

Year group	Term	Topic/theme details
Year 7	**Autumn 1**	**Wellbeing** • Making the move to secondary school • Managing emotions and reactions • Developing positive thinking habits • Managing tension and stress
Year 7	**Autumn 2**	**Relationships** • Friendship and empathy • Bullying and bystanders • Friendship challenges • Peer influence and coercive relationships
Year 7	**Spring 1**	**Relationships** • Understanding changing relationships • Roles in the family • Managing change, loss and grief
Year 7	**Spring 2**	**Wellbeing** • Puberty and emotional changes • Menstrual wellbeing • Testicular and vulval health
Year 7	**Summer 1**	**Relationships** • Healthy and unhealthy relationships • Managing conflict • Introduction to consent • Managing challenging content

Year group	Term	Topic/theme details
Year 7	**Summer 2**	**Economic wellbeing** **Wider PSHE only** • Making spending decisions and budgeting • Getting a job • Inflation and purchasing decisions • Financial decision making: budgeting for a summer holiday

Year 8

Year group	Term	Topic/theme details
Year 8	**Autumn 1**	**Health** • Making healthier choices • Physical activity • Importance of sleep • Dental health and GPs
Year 8	**Autumn 2**	**Health** • Firework and road safety • Safety around water • Understanding drugs • Tobacco and alcohol risks
Year 8	**Spring 1**	**Relationships** • Belonging and community • Bias, stereotypes and discrimination • Values and diverse communities
Year 8	**Spring 2**	**Health** • Phones and financial risk • Gaming, social media and algorithms • Money matters: health and support
Year 8	**Summer 1**	**Relationships** • Healthy relationships • Sexualised media and safer online relationships • Sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour • Sharing of nudes, consent and gender-based violence
Year 8	**Summer 2**	**Economic wellbeing** **Wider PSHE only** • Opening a bank account • Reading a bank statement and saving money • Using a bank card and managing debt • Financial decision making: a guide to banking

Year 9

Year group	Term	Topic/theme details
Year 9	**Autumn 1**	**Health** • Managing emotions • Managing distractions, disappointments and setbacks • Unhealthy coping strategies • Healthy coping strategies
Year 9	**Autumn 2**	**Health** • Impact of vaping • Exploring attitudes to substances • The law and managing risk • Alcohol, cannabis and managing influence
Year 9	**Spring 1**	**Economic wellbeing** • Managing pressure and seeking support **Wider PSHE** • Exploring career interests • Preparing for KS4 options
Year 9	**Spring 2**	**Economic wellbeing** **Wider PSHE only** • Serious and organised crime • Causes of cybercrime • Effects of cybercrime
Year 9	**Summer 1**	**Relationships** • Avoiding assumptions • Freedom and capacity to consent and relationship values • Contraception • Sexual health and managing relationships
Year 9	**Summer 2**	**Relationships** • Sharing indecent images • Deepfakes: consequences and motivations • Misogyny: exploring harms and misconceptions • Misogyny: responding

Year 10

Year group	Term	Topic/theme details
Year 10	**Autumn 1**	**Health** • AI and its impact on our daily lives • Limitations of generative AI • How generative AI affects our understanding of the world • Chatbots and impact on relationships
Year 10	**Autumn 2**	**Economic wellbeing** **Wider PSHE only** • Identifying career preferences • Navigating the careers landscape • Mapping a career path • Preparing for work experience
Year 10	**Spring 1**	**Health** • Impact and spread of misogynistic narratives • Challenging misogynistic beliefs **Wider PSHE** • All about the money: can it be trusted?
Year 10	**Spring 2**	**Health** • Food for thought: making informed choices • Testicular and breast cancer awareness **Wider PSHE** • Study skills for GCSEs
Year 10	**Summer 1**	**Relationships** • Intimacy and pleasure • Impact of pornography • FGM and forced marriage • Relationship rights and reporting abuse
Year 10	**Summer 2**	**Relationships** • Recognising and challenging bullying • Valuing diversity **Wider PSHE** • Understanding and preventing extremism • Extremist groups

Year 11

Year group	Term	Topic/theme details
Year 11	**Autumn 1**	**Wellbeing** • Mental health and wellbeing for life • Managing distractions and changing thinking habits • Managing stress and tension and accessing support • Managing change, loss and grief
Year 11	**Autumn 2**	**Wellbeing** • Drugs: assessing risk • Managing influence and seeking help • Gangs: how it starts and risks and consequences • Gangs: getting out
Year 11	**Spring 1**	**Relationships** • Healthy and unhealthy relationships • Power and control and setting boundaries • Sexual health and contraception
Year 11	**Spring 2**	**Relationships** • Long-term commitments and the legal status of marriage • Parenting, fertility and routes to parenthood • Pregnancy outcomes and choices
Year 11	**Summer 1**	**Exams** **Wider PSHE only** • Exam preparation • Focus on success
Year 11	**Summer 2**	**Exams** **Wider PSHE only** • Exam preparation • Focus on success

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary phase (age 11-16) school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status, e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents/carers with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are Trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: Trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	• The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships • How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• 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 • 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

Appendix 3: Parent/carer form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE ACADEMY	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents/carers	