

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Recommended by: Trust Lead for Personal Development

Approved by: Trust Board

Signed:



Position on the Board: Chair

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1. Introductory statement

The Central Region Schools Trust schools have adopted this policy and fully recognise the importance of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in compliance with the Department for Education (DfE) Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance, which came into effect on 1 September 2026.

“High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.” (DfE Statutory Guidance, 2026)

RSHE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of appropriate loving and caring relationships and the understanding of reproduction, sexuality and sexual health at an age appropriate level. Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive RSHE does not make young people more likely to become sexually active at a younger age. As a Trust, we ensure that RSHE is inclusive and meets the needs of all students, which is appropriate for their age, understanding and level of physical development with differentiated provision if required.

2. Values and Aims

Students will learn the significance of stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Care will be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of young people based on their home circumstances ensuring inclusivity and sensitivity for all learners and their backgrounds.

The CRST schools across the Trust serve a wide variety of communities and cultures and recognise the different beliefs and needs of each individual student cohort. Please see local arrangements for individual school details.

The aims of the RSHE programme of study are to enable students to:

be prepared for puberty and adulthood;

develop positive values and a moral framework that will 1) guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour 2) give them the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others 3) give them respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want;

- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships;
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted sexual behaviours;

- Communicate effectively by developing knowledge of appropriate terminology and ensuring knowledge and information is factually accurate and current;
- Know how the law applies to sexual relationships in order to safeguard themselves;
- Understand their personal feelings and behaviour so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives;
- Develop and use communication and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media;
- Challenge stereotyping and prejudice in order to encourage mutual respect;
- Make safe choices when using technology, such as social media platforms;
- Develop knowledge of when and how to access support and guidance;
- Make well-informed, positive choices to support their own health and mental wellbeing.

3. Legal Framework

The Central Region Schools Trust schools recognise that all schools are now required to provide statutory, high quality RSHE.

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, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. The revised DfE statutory guidance came into effect on 1 September 2026, and schools must have regard to it.

4. Policy Development

This policy has been developed by the CRST PSHE co-design group, in consultation with Kate Wilson (NHS advisor for RSHE in schools, Worcestershire) and local RSHE steering group (Redditch District schools).

All other relevant stakeholders have also been consulted. It has been ratified at school and Trust Board level.

This policy is available on all CRST school websites, with paper copies available on request.

5. Governance Assurance

The Trust Board retains ultimate accountability and strategic oversight for statutory compliance, safeguarding, equality and curriculum assurance in relation to RSHE. Local Academy Governing Boards support this through local assurance activity.

Each school is responsible for implementing the policy through its local RSHE curriculum arrangements, taking account of the age, development, needs and context of its pupils.

The Trust will seek assurance through appropriate curriculum, safeguarding and governance reporting routes, including publication of local RSHE curriculum information, consultation arrangements, withdrawal procedures and review processes.

6. Curriculum

Each school teaches similar content but in a way that suits their cohorts and local contexts. See schools' local arrangements for further detail.

7. Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSHE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a safeguarding nature. All staff will follow the school safeguarding and child protection procedure and policy in these circumstances. The Designated Safeguarding team is aware of all RSHE taking place in school and will be available to support as required.

Ground rules are essential to provide an agreed structure to answering sensitive or difficult questions. Teachers will endeavour to answer relevant questions as honestly as possible, but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within a classroom, provision will be made to meet the individual child's needs. This may involve referring the child back to their parent/carer, other school or health professional.

8. Equal Opportunities

All students are entitled to receive RSE regardless of ability, age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. RSHE must be accessible to all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and teaching should be sensitive, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate. Schools should also promote healthy and respectful peer-to-peer relationships and challenge everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and harmful gender stereotypes, in line with the DfE statutory guidance.

Any bullying around gender, sexuality or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with as a serious matter in accordance with the school's anti bullying policy.

9. Parents/ Carers

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education, Health Education or content that forms part of the National Curriculum for Science.

Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, other than sex education within the science curriculum.

For primary-aged students, the principal/head of school will automatically grant a request to withdraw a student from any sex education delivered other than as part of the science curriculum.

Before granting a request for withdrawal, it is good practice for the headteacher to discuss the request with the parent/carer and, as appropriate, the child, including the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the benefits of receiving this education. Except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect a parent/carer's request up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide sex education during one of those terms.

This approach reflects the DfE statutory guidance.

Schools will document any withdrawals.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

RSHE provision will be monitored at school level through curriculum review, staff feedback, pupil voice where appropriate, parental feedback and safeguarding monitoring.

School leaders will ensure that staff delivering RSHE receive appropriate support and training, and that resources are age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, inclusive and consistent with the DfE statutory guidance.

The Trust Board, or a committee acting on its behalf, will receive assurance that statutory duties are met and that local arrangements are reviewed in response to pupil need, parental engagement, safeguarding themes and changes to national guidance.

11. Related Policies and Documents

This policy is written in accordance with the following documents:

- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education Statutory Guidance \(DfE 2026\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- [National Curriculum for Science](#)
- PSHE policy
- Equality Objectives/Policy; [Equality Act 2010](#)
- Behaviour Policy including Anti-bullying
- Online Safety Policy