



# Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

**Review cycle:** Recommended annually

**Approval level:** Governing body

**Tier:** 1

**SLT Responsible for review:** Associate Assistant Headteacher (PDBW)

**Approved:** May 2023

**Next review:** May 2024

**MEMBERS OF STAFF INVOLVED:** All teaching staff at Todmorden High School

## **Context:**

The new statutory guidance on relationships and sex education and health education, which become mandatory in September 2020 have necessitated a revised policy for this curriculum. At Todmorden High School, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) should encompass all aspects of the new guidance, ensuring that content is age appropriate and delivered via an integrated approach so that a holistic and well considered understanding of a wide range of relationships, sex and health issues are formed by the end of year 11. In addition to covering facts about human reproductive processes and behaviour, for example, consideration of the broader emotional and ethical dimensions of sexual attitudes is fundamental. As the government attests, there will be a range of opinions on many of these matters, as link to religious, cultural or other beliefs. In dealing with sensitive matters the school's aim is to offer balanced and factual information and to acknowledge the major moral and ethical issues involved. This will include explicit teaching of the law, with reference to sex and relationships. The policy and content of the RSHE provision should be shared with parents so that they understand what is taught and how. The school must also make parents aware that, should they wish to remove their child from sex education (not the whole programme) they have the right to do so. Teaching of the RSHE curriculum must take into consideration the needs of all pupils and be accessible to all.

The full government guidance can be accessed here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/805781/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

## **Aims of RSHE:**

- i To give our young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.
- ii To give age-appropriate information relating to puberty, contraception and the many laws surrounding relationships
- iii To explore aspects of unhealthy relationships so that young people know what is acceptable and unacceptable, lawful and unlawful.
- iv To convey non-judgmental factual information about choice in relationships
- v To offer the opportunity to ask questions, and the mechanism to raise issues or seek information anonymously
- vi To develop an understanding of the links between healthy relationships and good physical and mental health
- vii To deliberately try to cultivate resilience and character in our young people through the exploration of relationships education, and to foster self-control and self-regulation
- vii To produce well informed and reflective young citizens who are confident in making healthy and lawful choices about their own lives
- ix To develop keen skills in online safety and a good understanding of how data may be generated, collected, shared and used by a whole range of users
- x To reduce stigma with regard to health issues, in particular with regard to mental wellbeing
- xi To inform young people about the wide range of effective support which can be accessed, both face-to-face and online

## **Method of Delivery:**

The RSHE programme is delivered via a variety of mechanisms, including:

1. ARCH Days: 3 of these are timetabled each year, and these are currently delivered to years 7-10. Content is taught to year 11 through focus sessions. Students attend lessons with their same teachers, but content is provided which covers the full range of Relationships and Sex Education and Health education. Quality external providers are sometimes utilised, for example, the PREVENT officer for Calderdale. Where external providers are used, the material will be shared with the school in advance to ensure that it meets the needs of the school and the delivery of our curriculum.
2. ARCH lessons (Y7 and Y8) – students in year 7 and year 8 have ARCH lessons for one hour per week for half the academic year. Within this, they cover all aspects of personal development, including relationships and sex education.
3. The Assembly Programme: This is strategically planned for the year and covers some aspects of the RSHE programme.
4. Personal Development in focus sessions (Monday): These inputs to form time are provided each Monday and cover many aspects of RSHE, including Mental Health Awareness.
5. Curriculum subjects: for example, the human reproductive system is covered in the science scheme of work, and the new Y8 Community Cohesion topic in EPR will cover issues of sexism and racism.
6. Other opportunities as decided by the school.

Lessons and other inputs (for example ARCH Days and focus sessions are currently planned by the Associate Assistant Headteacher: Personal Development and by the acting Head of Social Science. Other learning opportunities might be provided by members of the SLT, by Learning Managers and by curriculum leaders. Because of the method of delivery, all teachers are involved, for example in ARCH Days and Wellbeing Wednesday, and so must ensure that they read the resources provided beforehand in order to deliver a quality learning opportunity for the students in their care. Drop-in support sessions for teachers, ahead of each ARCH day, are offered to support all teachers with the effective and confident delivery of these sessions. ARCH lessons are generally of an hour's duration, allowing time to explore issues in depth and allow discussion; focus sessions are shorter, at about 20 minutes. Careful consideration is made in planning so that this time is used as effectively as possible in ensuring that statutory content is successfully delivered.

### **RSHE: Secondary Content**

The following, taken directly from the government statutory guidance document referenced above, is delivered throughout the secondary phase but age appropriate. For example, with regard to relationships, lower down the school (Years 7 and 8) the focus is on friendships and family relationships. In years 9-11, the topic is broadened to cover issues of sexual relationships. Leaders work hard to ensure that all content is adequately covered and that particular issues arising are given increased focus, if necessary. This adaptation may change from year to year, depending on need and circumstance.

### ***Families***

*Pupils should know:*

- *that there are many different types of committed, stable relationships between people of all sexualities.*
- *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 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**

*Pupils should know:*

- *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.*

### **Online and Media**

*Pupils should know:*

- *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**

*Pupils should know:*

- *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)*

### ***Intimate and Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health***

*Pupils should know:*

- *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 people, however they identify, are equally entitled to the happiness and security that meaningful relationships can bring, be they intimate relationships or friendships and that this entitlement is protected by law*
- *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.*

### ***Mental Wellbeing***

*Pupils should know:*

- *how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.*
- *that happiness is linked to being connected to others.*
- *how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.*
- *common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).*
- *how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.*
- *the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.*

### ***Internet Safety and Harms***

*Pupils should know:*

- *the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.*
- *how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.*

### **Physical Health and Fitness**

*Pupils should know:*

- *the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.*
- *the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.*
- *about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.*

### **Healthy Eating**

*Pupils should know:*

- *how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.*

### **Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco**

*Pupils should know*

- *the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.*
- *the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.*
- *the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.*
- *the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.*
- *awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.*
- *the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.*

### **Health and Prevention**

*Pupils should know:*

- *about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.*
- *about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.*
- *(late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.*
- *the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.*
- *the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.*

### **Basic First Aid**

*Pupils should know:*

- *basic treatment for common injuries.*
- *life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR*
- *the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.*

### **Changing Adolescent Body**

*Pupils should know:*

- *key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and*
- *menstrual wellbeing.*
- *the main changes which take place in males and females, and the*
- *implications for emotional and physical health.*

### **Quality Assurance**

There is an ongoing quality assurance system whereby leaders reserve the right to drop in on any lessons/ inputs to check on the quality of delivery. Teachers are regularly reminded that support is available via key staff in school, should this be required. Resources for ARCH Days, for example, are available well in advance, so that effective research and preparation is possible for all deliverers. Student Voice is sought regularly, and the findings used to inform future provision. We conduct both in-house surveys and the findings from the eHNA (electronic Health Needs Assessment) survey which Year 7 and year 10 complete each year. Whilst we are genuinely interested in what students have to say about their experiences, we reserve the right not to act on their opinions. For example, a recent survey showed that many of our older students believe they have had enough sessions relating to online safety. However, our daily experience shows that we still have much work to do in their area to ensure that all lessons have been learnt and all students are applying the information imparted to them. The government requires parents to be consulted about the content and delivery of RSHE and so we will display this policy on our school website and bring it to Parents' Forums for information and discussion.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All students regardless of their gender, religious or ethnic background are entitled to receive Todmorden High School's RSHE programme.

### **Curriculum entitlement**

All students are entitled to RSHE. In exceptional cases, some students with SEND may need slight amendments to the programme, for example when there is significant cognitive delay which means a session or sessions is not appropriate for that child at that time in their personal development. If this applies, arrangements will be put in place to deliver this content at an appropriate time.

### **Parental Right to Withdraw**

Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education delivered in school. Should a parent request this, a senior leader should meet with the parents and, if appropriate, also the child, to ensure that all are fully informed about what is delivered and how. The meeting will cover the perceived benefits of receiving this important education, as well as any detrimental effects withdrawal might result in. The meeting should be documented, and a record of discussions kept. Once a discussion has happened, if the parent still wishes to exercise their right of withdrawal, this wish should be respected, and alternative arrangements be made for that child.

This agreement should stay in place until revoked. However, three terms before a child turns 16 he or she is able to request sex education for him or herself. In this case, the school should provide that education at an appropriate time.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships or Health Education or any content that is included within the national curriculum.

### **SPECIFIC ISSUE STATEMENTS:**

#### **1. Contraceptive information and referrals to under 16's**

We will encourage students to keep an open dialogue with their parents. Students will be informed of external agencies that can provide support and advice, where needed. General and detailed information about contraception will be provided as part of the RSHE programme.

#### **2. Safeguarding and Child Protection**

Through the course of the RSHE programme, there is the possibility that students may share/disclose information that raises concern. Members of Staff are required to follow the usual procedure for referral to the School's Designated Senior Leader (DSL) for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

#### **3. Complaints Procedure**

If a parent has a complaint, it should first be referred to their child's Learning Manager. Many concerns can be solved informally through open dialogue. Should a complaint need to be taken further, our complaints procedure can be found on the school website.