

Thomas Telford School



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Prepared by: Emily Shade

Review by 16 July 2027

Rational and Ethos

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). Our school has a responsibility to provide all students with accurate information about relationship and health matters by promoting positive attitudes and values which influence healthy patterns of behaviour.

We believe that Relationships and Sex education should be part of the formal curriculum and something which permeates the ethos of the school.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) helps children and young people deal with some of the issues they face as they grow up.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils receive high-quality, age-appropriate, evidence-informed Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) that prepares them for adult life, promotes wellbeing, supports positive relationships and helps them recognise and respond to risks and harms. RSE will support pupils to:

- Develop healthy, respectful and caring relationships.
- Build resilience, self-respect, self-worth and personal responsibility.
- Understand the importance of consent, boundaries and mutual respect.
- Make informed and ethical decisions about their health and relationships.
- Recognise unsafe situations, abuse, exploitation, coercion and harassment.
- Know how and where to access support and reliable information.
- Respect diversity and individual differences within a safe and inclusive environment.

This policy reflects the Department for Education statutory guidance, effective from September 2026.

Roles and Responsibilities

At Thomas Telford we believe that:

- All students have access to high quality RSE to help create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life.
- Staff will promote within the RSE Programme, courtesy, respect, and acceptance of responsibility for self and for others and will develop a teaching approach which will be complementary and supportive to the role of parents.
- Staff that deliver the RSE Programme should receive continuing professional development to enhance their skills within this area of specialism.
- Parents will be informed of the content of the RSE and Health Education Programme, which will reflect parents' views in its content and presentation.
- The headmaster and teachers will ensure that the RSE and Health Education programme is delivered in accordance with the Department for Education statutory guidance.

Legislation

Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019. Schools are required to have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education and must maintain an up-to-date written RSE policy. Parents must be consulted during the development and review of the policy, and the policy must be published and made available free of charge on request.

The school will:

- Duty to promote well-being (Children Act 2004)
- Duty to prepare children for the challenges, opportunities, and responsibilities of adult life (Education Act 2006)
- Ensure pupils learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up of children (Learning and Skills Act 2006)
- Protect pupils from unsuitable teaching and materials (Learning and Skills Act 2006) to Teach statutory RSE elements in the Science National Curriculum
- Have an up-to-date policy developed in consultation with parents, staff and governors (Education Act 1996) to Meet the school's safeguarding obligations.
- Make the policy available to pupils and parents (Education Act 1996)
- Right of parental withdrawal from all or part of RSE except those parts included in the national curriculum (Education Act 1996)
- Take account of the DfE guidance on RSE (2019)
- DfE expects that all state schools "should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and that "RSE is an important part of PSHE" (DfE guidance on PSHE 2013)
- Prevent discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups (Equality Act 2010)

How is RSE taught?

Pupils are taught in mixed groups to ensure that boys and girls learn the same information. Most of the content is delivered in mixed sex groups of 12-15.

The sessions will include videos, discussions, worksheets, online materials, and a wide variety of other teaching resources which promote understanding within a moral context and underpin the values and ethos of the school. Students consider equality of opportunity through their use of language, cultural attitudes, family make-up and images, including body image, avoiding stereotyping, racism, and sexism. Each class will work on the same key theme at the same time.

Students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress through discussion and the use of baseline and exit assessments of their own learning. We believe that the best practice in planning the curriculum is to take a spiral approach which gradually revisits and reintroduces topics at a more complex level for each year group. This allows students to embed the essential skills and attributes young people need to manage their lives – both now and in the future.

Safe and effective practice

Teachers set a group agreement or ground rules with students to ensure that an atmosphere is created where students feel able to ask questions, discuss concerns, talk about feelings and relationships, but do not discuss or ask private information of each other or the teacher. Staff will devise an agreed protocol which they will follow to deal with potentially sensitive issues or use to seek support. Questions will be answered honestly and sensitively, appropriate to the age and maturity of the students. Some questions may be more appropriately answered on a one-to-one basis, rather than with the whole class.

Teachers are sensitive to the issues of different types of relationships. Promoting inclusion and reducing discrimination are part of RSE throughout the school and reflect our equality policy. When teaching about relationships and families we also include same sex relationships. Homophobic and transphobic references and homophobic and transphobic actions and bullying are not tolerated in school and are challenged and dealt with as part of our commitment to promoting inclusion, gender equality and preventing bullying. Developing the correct terminology will be a key part of teaching to make it clear that everybody uses common words and so avoid using prejudiced or offensive language. Teaching about different families is part of RSE and we aim to reflect the broad range of experiences amongst students and ensure all students feel their family is valued, such as: single parent families; recently divorced parents; parents who are married, parents who are not married, parents who have non-monogamous relationships; lesbian, gay or bisexual parents; children living between two homes; in foster homes; in residential homes and living with relations other than biological parents. We will emphasise the importance of strong and supportive relationships, including marriage (both heterosexual and gay) and civil partnerships, for family life and bringing up children. RSE lays the foundations for developing empathy and understanding between girls and boys, young men, and young women. Students should be encouraged to consider the importance of equality and respect within friendships and relationships, and to develop positive, non-violent behaviour.

Curriculum Design

Components of the Relationships and Sex Education Programme

The school's RSE curriculum will be delivered through a planned programme and will cover statutory secondary content, including:

Positive Relationships

- Healthy friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Family relationships
- Commitment and long-term relationships
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Communication skills and conflict resolution

Safety and Safeguarding

- Consent and personal boundaries
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Exploitation, grooming and abuse
- Reporting concerns and seeking support
- Online safety, including social media, image sharing and digital relationships

Sexual Relationships and Sexual Health

- Sexual health and wellbeing
- Reproduction and fertility
- Contraception and pregnancy choices
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Accessing healthcare and support services

Equality and Diversity

- Respect for difference and diversity
- Inclusion and protected characteristics
- Challenging discrimination, prejudice and bullying

Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

- Self-esteem and body image
- Managing emotions
- Healthy decision-making
- Building resilience

The curriculum will be carefully sequenced, age-appropriate and responsive to the needs of pupils while maintaining compliance with statutory guidance.

An overview of the learning in each year group can be found below:

Coordinators: Emily Shade

Teachers: Rajinder Mackay, Stephanie Lester, Johnathan Tindall, Scott Hedditch, Lewis Walker, Zoe Knight

Year 7

Lesson 1 - Puberty, periods and changing bodies

Lesson 2 - Types of relationships & respect

Lesson 3 - Boundaries, safety and online behaviour

Year 8

Lesson 1 - Healthy vs Unhealthy relationships

Lesson 2 – Peer pressure and Consent

Lesson 3 – Online risks and Media influence

Additional mental health & wellbeing session during Careers & Activity Week

Year 9

Lesson 1 – Consent, power and equality

Lesson 2: Harmful behaviour, abuse and the law

Lesson 3: Contraception, STI's and sexual health

Year 10

Lesson 1 – Intimate relationships and consent

Lesson 2 – Pornography, media and sexual ethics

Lesson 3 - Pregnancy, choice and support

For further information regarding content, see statutory guidance:

[Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK](#)

Monitoring and evaluation

- Staff will promote within the RSE, courtesy, respect, and acceptance of responsibility for self and for others and will develop a teaching approach which will be complementary and supportive to the role of parents.
- Staff will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through lesson evaluation and meetings with the PSHE co-ordinators.
- Staff that deliver the RSE should receive continuing professional development to enhance their skills within this area of specialism.
- The delivery of RSE will be monitored and evaluated in the same way as other subjects to ensure that the provision of RSE is consistently delivered to a high standard.
- All students have a right to be informed on matters of health and sexual development and that this should be delivered across the curriculum. Students will be given the opportunity to give their input on the content and quality of RSE using whole group surveys and student voice meetings.

Engaging Stakeholders

- Parents will be informed of the content of the RSE, which will reflect parents' views in its content and presentation.
- We will notify parents when RSE will be taught in the form of a letter which will give parents the opportunity to ask questions or raise concerns.
- Parent information sessions and opportunities for parents to view the materials and resources will be made available if this is required.
- The policy will be available to parents through the school website.
- Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education.
- If parents wish to withdraw their child from any part of the Sex Education Programme, they will be given the opportunity to do so by contacting Miss Emily Shade
- Governors will be informed of the RSE and Health Education policy and curriculum.

Curriculum accessibility (SEND)

The RSE curriculum will be made accessible to all pupils including those with SEND through high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised. When preparing these lessons for those with SEND, there will be consultation with the SENCO before delivering the RSE programme.

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed in July 2027 to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the students, staff, and parents.