

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

Stockport Academy is committed to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of every child and young person. This policy sets out the aims of our Relationships, Sex and Health Education policy at Stockport Academy and its approach in ensuring that all children are prepared for experiences and responsibilities of adult life in keeping with its core aims and values to bring out the 'best in everyone'.

The policy is based on the school's basic principles of 'Aspiration, Respect and Community', whole school 'Future Me' and its aim to ensure that children follow these basic principles throughout their life. Stockport Academy recognises that the primary responsibility with regards to teaching of Relationships, Sex and Health Education lies with parents/carers; this policy seeks to work in partnership with and complimentary to parent/carer support.

Effective teaching of Relationships, Sex and Health Education is important to ensure that children grow up able to enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding, lasting, responsible and respectful relationships, to be informed, comfortable with the changes during puberty, sexually healthy and emotionally safe. Children should have the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and well-being, recognise issues when they arise and seek support as early as possible. The purpose of this policy is to give children and young people the skills, knowledge and understanding that they will need in order to make responsible decisions about their life, to learn to respect themselves and others and to move with confidence from childhood into adolescence and adulthood. It is centrally concerned with supporting children and young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.

As part of our commitment to delivering high-quality RSHE, our curriculum includes a dedicated focus on preventing sexual harassment and sexual violence, positioning RSHE as a key tool in the wider effort to prevent violence against women and girls. From the early years, we prioritise the development of healthy relationship skills, fostering respect, empathy, and personal boundaries. Our online safety education has been strengthened to address emerging risks, including exposure to pornography, misogynistic influencers, and other harmful content. We have also introduced age-appropriate teaching on suicide prevention at secondary level, ensuring staff are equipped with the necessary training and support before engaging pupils in this sensitive topic. In line with updated guidance, our curriculum reflects the diversity of families, including same-sex parents, and clearly distinguishes between biological sex and gender reassignment, acknowledging legal interpretations and ongoing societal debate. We are committed to avoiding gender stereotypes in both language and activities, in accordance with the Cass Review (2024). While age limits have been removed for certain topics, we continue to ensure all content is developmentally appropriate. We also promote transparency and openness with parents, recognising their vital role in supporting their child's RSHE journey.

The Religious backgrounds of all children will be taken into account when planning teaching and materials with sensitive topics being handled appropriately and by trained staff. All relationship education teaching will meet the requirement of equality law. Delivery of the content covered by this policy will be made accessible to all children including those with SEND, in line with Stockport Academy's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report.

The policy has been developed in keeping with The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2025, the objective being to enable children to learn about:

- Families and people who care for them, including the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children;
- Forming and maintaining caring relationships;
- The characteristics of healthy and respectful relationships, including online;
- How relationships may affect physical and mental health and wellbeing and how to ensure they are safe;
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health; and
- Protection and support of their own health and wellbeing, recognising the relationship between good physical health and mental wellbeing.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with United Learning – Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policies and Procedures, Anti-Bullying Policy, Equality and Access Objectives, and Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy.

The Policy's aims are to:

- Enable young people to understand and accept themselves and others, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, culture, disability, faith or age. All members of the community will be encouraged to accept and celebrate differences and will be given opportunities to do so. Students will be given the knowledge and skills to prevent prejudice and to challenge it where it occurs;
- Support students in developing the confidence, self-awareness, self-respect and esteem to make their own decisions with regards to positive, healthy, mature relationships and life choices and to resist peer pressure;
- Support students in the development of communication and decision-making skills so that they are able to effectively manage their own relationships and to provide them with an understanding of the potential dangers of social media and online facilities in relationships;
- Develop students understanding appropriate and inappropriate, controlling, exploitative or abusive behaviour within any relationship, in order to reduce its incidence and to build confidence to deal with it if it occurs, seeking to reduce violence;
- Support students in developing an understanding, appropriate to their level of maturity and developmental needs, of sexual and physical relationships;
- Ensure that students are not encouraged in participating in early sexual experimentation and understanding the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits of this;
- Provide students with understanding of arguments/issues around sexual activity and safe physical relationships;
- Ensure that students develop knowledge of how the law applies to sexual relationships;
- Provide students with the opportunity to ask questions confidentially or without embarrassment and seek answers to questions about emotional or physical relationships;
- Provide students with the knowledge, understanding and information of where to turn for advice;
- Ensure that all students develop an understanding of the value of stable, loving and caring long-term relationships, as key building blocks of society and as providing a strong basis for bringing up children. Students will be appreciative of marriage, civil partnerships, family life and the implications of parenthood, recognising also that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage;
- Ensure that all students value all relationships, understand that the school is fully inclusive, encourages mutual respect and celebrates diversity and that it is not in keeping with the ethos of our school that any young person is stigmatised on the grounds of their own family background or circumstances;
- Ensure that young people have an accurate understanding of contraception, the risks of sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexuality and emotional and physical development. Students will be given the opportunity to discuss openly without prejudice or influence by teachers or facilitators;
- Instil a respect for the cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality, respect individual differences including those relating to cultural, religious, ethnic and family backgrounds and promote values of respect and dignity for human life and commitment, trust, love and honesty within relationships which are common to all faiths and societies;
- Ensure that young people have the opportunity to develop outward facing social skills through co-curricular activities which are beneficial to wellbeing as well as helping to develop a stronger society;
- Provide students with factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs, alcohol and effective interventions;
- Ensure students are aware of the impact of time spent on social media including online forums and games.; and
- Help students recognise the contribution that hobbies, interests and community participation have to overall wellbeing.

To achieve these aims we will:

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- Teach students the statutory aspects of sex and relationships as directed by the national curriculum for Science;
- Ensure that differentiated, age appropriate, Relationship and Sex Education will be rooted in the framework for SRE/PSHE/Future Me in addition to integration across the curriculum;
- Ensure that children are prepared for the changes of puberty;
- Develop programmes of study that enable students to consider different views and separate facts from myths in relation to abortion, contraception, sexuality, sexual orientation, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases or any other issue related to sex and relationships;
- Facilitate opportunities to discuss topics such as contraception, abortion, homosexuality, sexuality HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, without prejudice or influence;
- Ensure that we do not promote any particular sexuality, promoting respect for and acceptance of others, whatever their sexuality, and will challenge prejudice based on gender, sexuality or other grounds;
- Provide off-timetable days per year where all students take part in a range of PSHE and careers workshops and trips:
 - Workshops include building self-esteem, relationships and sexual, consent, household budgeting, "Why higher education?" and "Not going to university";
 - Workshops are delivered by qualified external agencies including Respect Me, Greater Manchester Higher, BROOK, Barclays Bank and Proud Trust and specialist internal staff; and
 - Trips have included Bury Fire Safety Centre, theatre performance of 'En ger land', Aerozone Manchester Airport, Oxford University, University and Apprenticeship fair's, Eureka and National Football Museum;
- Deliver dedicated PSHE lessons within the RSS scheme of work for KS3, Science, PE, Food Technology, Drama, Performing Arts and Dance delivering aspects of PSHE to KS3 and 4 within lessons, weekly assemblies, daily co-curricular clubs and a range of enterprise days so that students can further develop their 'Future Me';
- Provide fortnightly PSHE lessons to all Year 7/8 students, delivered by qualified staff as part of their timetabled lessons;
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained and supported so that the programme is delivered effectively;
- Provide access to appropriate outside agencies including the school nurse for students to refer to for further advice or support. Students will be informed about and provided with information in relation to how to communicate concerns and seek advice without embarrassment;
- Enlist the support/advice of outside agencies in development of Future Me drop down days to enable students to access professional expert advice. A member of school staff will always be present in sessions delivered by any external provider;
- Develop programmes of study to enable students to explore their own self-awareness and strategies to resist peer pressure, including an understanding of the pressures placed by the media; and
- Evaluate and monitor programmes of PSHE and take into account views of varied stakeholders;

Topics covered by each Year Group:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Respectful relationships • Multicultural Britain • What is your identity? • Breaking down stereotypes in Society. • Prejudice and Discrimination Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health • Introduction to Puberty • Puberty Girls • Puberty Boys • Managing healthy friendships Health • Consent and boundaries • Being Positive • Dangers of Vaping • Personal Hygiene Online and the media • Avoiding gangs • Staying safe online • Online gaming Alcohol and Choices • What is alcohol? • Careers and Your Future • Transition points Politics • Why is politics important? • How is a country run? Creating a political party • Elections and Campaigning.	Respectful relationships • Healthy Relationships • What is gender? • What is sexual orientation? Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health • Challenging homophobia • Transphobia • Sexual consent, harassment and coercion. • Contraception. Mental wellbeing • What is mental health? • Positive body image. • Self esteem and the media. • Child abuse. Being safe • Online safety – cyber bullying • Grooming • Drugs • Child exploitation and online protection. • What is County Lines? • Substance misuse. Crime • Crime, Law and society • Law making in the UK Prison reforms and Punishment.	Respectful relationships • Criminal behaviour within relationships Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health • Contraception, STI's • Characteristics of healthy relationships • Identifying and managing sexual pressure Mental wellbeing • How to talk about emotions accurately • Association between mental wellbeing and physical activity Being safe • Concepts and laws on sexual consent, exploitation, grooming, FGM, honour-based abuse and rape. • How to communicate and recognise consent • First aid Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol • Law relating to supply and possession • Harms of smoking tobacco • Physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption	Respectful relationships • Coercive control and violent behaviour • Sexting Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health • Characteristics of healthy relationships • Physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • Identifying and managing sexual pressure • STI's Mental wellbeing • Healthy lifestyle, healthy weight • Personal hygiene Online and the media • Impact of viewing harmful content Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol • Facts and legal and illegal drugs, risks and mental health conditions • Law relating to supply and possession • Physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption	Respectful relationships • Different types of bullying • Respect and tolerance Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health • Characteristics of healthy relationships • Physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. Being Safe • Concept and Law on Sexual consent. • Sexual Exploitation • Abuse, grooming, coercion Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol • Drugs, alcohol and tobacco • Physical and Psychological risks

Confidentiality and reference to child protection procedures

Wherever appropriate, teachers should encourage all students to discuss their concerns with an appropriate adult. Teachers should make it clear to students the level of confidentiality that they can offer. Due to the guidelines in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality.

Responsibilities

Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the Academy delivers appropriate education in Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in keeping with published guidelines and this policy.

The Governors, thus have a responsibility to ensure an up-to-date written statement of this policy is provided and to support its implementation throughout the curriculum. This policy will be updated annually or as required by law.

The Local Governing Body will ensure that parents/carers and other appropriate stakeholders are consulted and that their views are considered when the school implements the Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy.

The Principal/Teachers

All teachers have a responsibility of care. As well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well being of their students.

Teachers with responsibility for SMSC/PSHE will monitor carefully programmes of delivery and evaluate regularly its appropriateness and effectiveness and will communicate with parents/carers with regards to programmes and their planned delivery.

The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that opportunities exist for teachers to participate in in-service training in order to gain the confidence, insight and personal skills needed to deliver and support the programme of relationships, sex and health education and to review the policy at regular intervals.

All teachers should receive appropriate training and have a developed understanding of when to counsel in matters discussed in PSHE /SMSC (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education / Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) and when and how to refer for specialist counselling and support.

Where external specialists are brought in to support Relationships, Sex and Health Education they will be required to conform to the school's RSHE Policy.

All teachers should ensure that their personal attitudes, opinions or beliefs do not unduly influence the teaching of relationships, sex and health education and ensure that teaching materials are appropriate to the age and cultural background of the students concerned.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex and health and maintaining the culture and ethos of the family, helping children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

Stockport Academy respects the religious and ethical beliefs of students and their parents/carers. Parents/carers may withdraw students from RSHE except in relation to the requirements to teach human reproduction in biology and relationships education.

Agreed by Stockport Academy LGB October 2025

Review Annually