

Relationships, Sex & Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Summary

This policy document is to detail the approach to the teaching of relationships, sex & health education in our primary and secondary academies.



If you are unsure about the validity of the content of this policy please refer to the Policy Owner.

Please Note: This policy is applicable to All Employees

Policy owner	Trust Board
Policy holder	Director of Education
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Policy Inventory ID Number	E05
Group Policy Area	Education

Approved by

Consultation Group	Board
Approval Committee	Board
Implementation date	March 2026
Review Date	March 2028

Version Control

Control No	Change summary	Consultation Group	Effective date
03	Policy has been completely changed to align with July 2025 legislation	Board	March 2026

1. Purpose

Eastern Multi-Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that pupils receive high-quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) that supports their wellbeing, personal development and safety.

RSHE plays a vital role in preparing children and young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Effective RSHE teaching helps pupils develop knowledge and skills that enable them to:

- Build positive relationships
- Recognise and manage risks
- Make informed decisions about their wellbeing
- Develop resilience and self-respect
- Understand how to keep themselves and others safe

This policy sets out the Trust framework and expectations for RSHE provision across all academies.

Each academy within the Trust must:

- Maintain a clear and up-to-date academy-level RSHE policy
- Ensure its curriculum aligns with statutory guidance (July 2025)
- Consult parents when developing or reviewing the policy
- Publish the policy on the academy website

Academy-Level Policy Requirements

To ensure full statutory compliance, each academy policy must clearly set out:

- The content of the RSHE curriculum, including coverage of Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education
- How and when RSHE is taught, including curriculum sequencing and timetabling
- Who delivers RSHE, including the use of external providers
- How RSHE is made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- How the academy monitors and evaluates RSHE provision, including governance oversight
- How parents can access and view curriculum materials
- How sensitive issues and difficult questions are managed in the classroom.

Academies may adapt their RSHE curriculum to reflect their local context, provided that all statutory content is covered and the principles of this Trust policy are upheld.

Trust Expectation

This Trust policy ensures:

- consistency of statutory compliance across academies
- clarity of expectations for leaders, staff and governors
- a coherent approach to safeguarding, wellbeing and personal development through RSHE.

It should be read alongside individual academy RSHE policies, which provide detail on local implementation.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy reflects the Department for Education statutory guidance:

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education – July 2025.

Academies must have regard to this guidance when developing and delivering their RSHE curriculum from September 2026.

The statutory duties arise from:

- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Education Act 2002
- Education Act 1996
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.

Under these requirements:

- Relationships Education is compulsory in primary schools
- Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in secondary schools
- Health Education is compulsory in all state-funded schools.

RSHE forms part of the basic school curriculum, which allows schools flexibility in designing their curriculum within a broad and balanced programme of education.

RSHE also contributes significantly to pupils’:

- personal development
- safeguarding awareness
- spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- readiness for adult life.

3. Principles for RSHE Delivery

Academies within the Trust should develop RSHE curriculum that reflect the following principles.

Engagement with pupils

RSHE teaching should be informed by meaningful engagement with pupils so that it reflects their needs and experiences.

Transparency with parents

Schools should engage openly with parents about RSHE content and ensure parents understand the importance of the subject for children's wellbeing and safety.

Positive relationships

Teaching should promote healthy, respectful relationships and positive attitudes towards wellbeing.

Careful sequencing

Curriculum content should be carefully sequenced so pupils receive knowledge and skills before they encounter potential risks or complex situations.

- curriculum maps must be uploaded to the academy websites and be in line with the expectations of this policy.
- academies must maintain a clearly sequenced RSHE curriculum map demonstrating progression from EYFS to Y6, EYFS to Y2, Y3 to Y6 or Y7 to Y11 depending on context.

Skilled delivery

RSHE should be delivered by trained staff capable of facilitating sensitive discussion and creating a safe learning environment.

Whole-school approach

RSHE should be embedded within a wider culture that promotes:

- safeguarding
- wellbeing
- respectful behaviour
- inclusive values.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Trust Board

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that:

- academies comply with statutory requirements through delegation to Academy Committee members
- statutory policies are in place
- effective oversight of RSHE provision is maintained

Local Governing Bodies

Local governing bodies are responsible for:

- ensuring the academy has an up-to-date RSHE policy
- monitoring the effectiveness of RSHE provision
- ensuring parental engagement in policy development
- teaching is accessible to pupils with SEND
- curriculum content aligns with statutory guidance

Principals

Principals are responsible for:

- implementing the academy RSHE policy
- ensuring the curriculum meets statutory requirements
- ensuring staff who deliver RSHE are appropriately trained and receive safeguarding updates relating to sexual harassment, exploitation, and online harms.
- ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed.

Staff

Staff delivering RSHE must:

- provide accurate and balanced information
- create safe environments for discussion
- respond appropriately to pupil questions
- follow safeguarding procedures if disclosures occur.

5. Curriculum Design and Delivery

Academies have flexibility in how RSHE is delivered within a broad and balanced curriculum.

RSHE may be delivered through:

- PSHE programmes
- science
- citizenship
- computing
- physical education
- assemblies or pastoral programmes.

Curriculum leaders should ensure that RSHE complements learning in other subjects and does not duplicate national curriculum content.

Where external organisations contribute to teaching, academies remain responsible for ensuring that content is appropriate and aligned with statutory guidance.

6. Health Education

Health Education forms a core component of RSHE and is compulsory in all state-funded schools and academies.

Health education aims to enable pupils to make informed decisions about their physical and mental wellbeing and to recognise when they or others may need support.

Teaching should help pupils to:

- understand the relationship between physical and mental health
- develop strategies for emotional resilience
- recognise when something is wrong and seek help
- understand how to access appropriate services.

Teaching should promote open discussion about health issues while reducing stigma associated with mental health.

7. Teaching About the Law

When relevant topics are taught, pupils should understand the legal frameworks that apply to relationships, safety and health.

Teaching should include factual information about laws relating to:

- consent and the age of consent
- marriage and civil partnership
- forced marriage and marriage under 18
- domestic abuse
- sexual offences
- sexual harassment and exploitation
- female genital mutilation
- online abuse and image sharing
- pornography
- alcohol, smoking, vaping and drug use
- gambling
- knife crime and weapons
- extremism and radicalisation
- hate crime
- medical consent and Gillick competence.

Teaching about the law helps pupils understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

8. Online Safety and Emerging Technology

RSHE teaching must address the risks and responsibilities associated with digital technology.

Pupils should learn about:

- respectful behaviour online

- risks associated with sharing personal information
- harmful online content and contact
- misleading or unrealistic representations on social media
- risks associated with AI-generated content and deepfakes
- online scams and sextortion
- strategies for reporting harmful behaviour online.

Teaching should also develop pupils' critical thinking about how information and personal data are used online.

9. Safeguarding and Sensitive Topics

RSHE may include discussion of sensitive issues such as:

- sexual harassment
- harmful sexual behaviour
- online exploitation
- abuse within relationships.

Teaching should be delivered sensitively and at an age-appropriate level.

Staff must ensure pupils know how to seek support and must follow safeguarding procedures if concerns or disclosures arise.

10. Equality and Inclusion

RSHE must be delivered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Teaching should:

- be inclusive and accessible
- respect diversity
- reflect different family structures
- support pupils with SEND.

Academies should ensure pupils are not stigmatised because of their family circumstances.

11. Engagement with Parents

Academies must consult parents when developing and reviewing RSHE policies.

Schools should ensure parents:

- understand the content of RSHE
- understand its role in safeguarding and wellbeing
- have opportunities to discuss concerns.

12. Access to Curriculum Materials

Parents may request to view teaching materials used in RSHE.

Academies will make materials available through appropriate means, such as:

- parent information sessions
- secure online access
- viewing materials at the academy.

Where external providers are used, academies must ensure that materials can be shared with parents.

Contractual restrictions preventing materials being shared with parents will not be accepted.

Where copyright applies, academies will comply with copyright law when sharing materials but this will not prevent parents from viewing them.

13. Withdrawal from Sex Education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Sex Education.

Before granting such a request, the principal, or appropriate delegated member of staff, should discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil, to ensure they understand the curriculum and the potential implications of withdrawal.

In primary schools, requests to withdraw from sex education must be granted except where content forms part of the science curriculum.

In secondary schools, principals may refuse a request for withdrawal in exceptional circumstances, such as where safeguarding concerns require the pupil to receive the education.

Pupils may choose to opt back into sex education from three terms before their 16th birthday.

If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the academy will ensure that appropriate, purposeful education is provided during the period of withdrawal.

Parents **do not have the right to withdraw** pupils from:

- relationships education
- health education
- science curriculum content

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

Academies should regularly review RSHE provision through:

- curriculum monitoring
- audits
- pupil voice

- staff feedback
- safeguarding reviews
- governor monitoring

Academy Committees should receive regular updates on RSHE provision.

Trust leaders may also review provision through school improvement processes.

15. Policy Review

This Trust policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

Academies must ensure their own RSHE policies is reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

Curriculum Coverage

Primary
Relationships Education
Families and people who care for me Curriculum content: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.3. That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.4. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.5. That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
Caring friendships Curriculum content: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.2. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships.3. That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.4. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.5. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened.6. How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.
Respectful, kind relationships Curriculum content: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated.

2. The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults.
3. How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.
4. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs.
5. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
6. Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships.
7. The conventions of courtesy and manners.
8. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.
9. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.
10. What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.
11. How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Online safety and awareness

Curriculum content:

1. That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.
2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.
3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.
4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.
5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.
6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.

Being Safe

Curriculum content:

1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.
2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.
4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.
5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.
6. How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
7. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Sex Education in Primary Schools

In line with the expectations set out by the Department for Education (DfE) within the statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, sex education is not compulsory in primary schools outside of the National Curriculum for Science.

However, the Trust recognises the importance of ensuring pupils receive age-appropriate knowledge that supports their understanding of the human body, relationships and development. For this reason, all primary academies within the Trust will teach age-appropriate sex education in the later years of primary school, typically in Years 5 and/or 6.

This teaching will support and complement the statutory content within the National Curriculum for Science.

The National Curriculum for Science requires pupils to learn about:

- the main external parts of the human body
- how the human body grows and changes from birth to old age, including puberty
- reproduction in some plants and animals

Where academies teach additional sex education beyond the statutory science curriculum, this will:

- be age appropriate, factual and developmentally suitable
- be delivered within the broader context of relationships, health and wellbeing
- align with the Trust's commitment to safeguarding, respect and personal development.

In accordance with DfE guidance, academies will consult with parents and carers regarding the content of sex education delivered outside the statutory science curriculum. This consultation will include:

- providing clear information about the content and purpose of the teaching
- offering guidance and support for parents and carers to help them discuss these topics with their children at home
- informing parents of their right to request that their child be withdrawn from sex education delivered outside the National Curriculum for Science.

Requests for withdrawal will be considered in line with statutory guidance. Where a pupil is withdrawn from these non-statutory elements, the academy will ensure that appropriate, purposeful alternative education is provided during that time.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw pupils from:

- relationships education
- health education
- statutory science curriculum content.

Secondary

Relationship and Sex Education

- Content should have clear progression from primary education.

Families

Curriculum content:

1. That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
2. How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children.
3. Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony.
4. That 'common-law marriage' is a myth and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children.
5. That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal.⁸
6. How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.
7. The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development.
8. How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Respectful relationships

Curriculum content:

1. The characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.
2. How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal.
3. The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others.
4. What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs.
5. The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict.
6. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
7. Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration.
8. The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok.
9. How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice.
10. How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others.
11. How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others.
12. Pupils should have an opportunity to discuss how some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called "involuntary celibates" (incels) or online influencers.

Online safety and awareness

Curriculum content:

1. Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
2. Online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect

information online. Pupils should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues.

3. The characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and / or may post things which aren't real / have been created with AI. That social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online.
4. Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images.
5. That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Pupils should know how to seek support and should understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared. Pupils should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime.
6. What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online.⁹
7. About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them.
8. That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamorise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong.
9. That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice.
10. How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns.
11. That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately. Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it.
12. How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
13. That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (e.g. to enable targeted advertising).
14. That criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion.
15. That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. It is important to be able to

critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk.

Being Safe

Curriculum content:

1. How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent.
2. That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others.
3. How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
4. How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. Pupils should learn ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. Pupils should understand that there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. Pupils might reflect on the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions.
5. What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it.
6. That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting.
7. The concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault.
8. The concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language.
9. The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.¹⁰
10. That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.
11. The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation.
12. The concepts and laws relating to forced marriage.
13. The physical and emotional damage which can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty, where to find support, and the law around these areas. This should include that it is a criminal offence for anyone to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, in the UK or abroad, or to fail to protect a person under 16 for whom they are responsible.
14. That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury. That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death.

15. That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful.
16. How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse, and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Curriculum content:

1. That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.
2. The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex.
3. Sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, e.g. the law, faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent.
4. 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.
5. That some sexual behaviours can be harmful.
6. The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decisionmaking.
7. That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.
8. How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use). The use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma
9. The prevalence of STIs, the short and long term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
10. How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.
11. How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms.
12. How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE): Secondary

In accordance with the expectations set out by the Department for Education (DfE) within the statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), academies within the Trust

will ensure that Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in secondary education builds upon the foundations established through primary relationships education.

Secondary RSE will provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to develop healthy, safe and respectful relationships. The curriculum will ensure that young people are equipped with accurate information to support their wellbeing and safety, including understanding how to maintain healthy relationships, protect themselves and others, and reduce risks associated with sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy.

Consistent with DfE guidance, the Trust expects that RSE provision:

- Promotes respect for oneself and others as the foundation of healthy relationships
- Does not encourage or normalise early sexual experimentation
- Supports the development of confidence, self-esteem and personal responsibility

Through effective RSE teaching, pupils will be supported to make informed and responsible choices about relationships and sexual activity once they reach the legal age of consent. Teaching will also equip pupils with the skills to recognise and resist pressure, enabling them to develop safe, respectful and fulfilling relationships in later life.

Teaching approaches across Trust academies will reflect best practice outlined by the DfE. RSE lessons will therefore be:

- Participative and interactive, enabling pupils to engage actively with learning
- Structured to develop communication, reflection and decision-making skills
- Designed to allow pupils to discuss and critically evaluate complex relationship scenarios in a safe and supportive environment.

The secondary RSE curriculum will cover a broad range of topics, including issues related to abusive or unhealthy relationships. When teaching pupils how to stay safe, including in online environments, staff will emphasise clearly that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child or young person. Sensitive issues will be addressed carefully and in an age-appropriate manner, recognising that some pupils may have direct or indirect experience of unhealthy or unsafe relationships.

The Trust recognises that schools play a crucial safeguarding role. For pupils experiencing or who have experienced unsafe relationships, including within the home, academies will seek to ensure that the school environment remains a consistent, supportive and safe place where pupils can access help and guidance.

When delivering sensitive content, staff may use appropriate pedagogical approaches recommended within DfE guidance. These may include:

- The use of distancing techniques, such as scenario-based discussions
- Establishing clear ground rules to support respectful dialogue
- Providing anonymous question opportunities, such as question boxes, to allow pupils to raise concerns safely.

Through these approaches, the Trust seeks to ensure that RSE is delivered in a manner that is informative, respectful, safeguarding-focused and supportive of pupils' personal development.

Primary Health & Well-being

General wellbeing

Curriculum content:

1. The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.
2. The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.
3. The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.
4. How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.
5. How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
6. That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.
7. That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.
8. That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.
9. Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
10. That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.

Wellbeing online

Curriculum content:

1. That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.
2. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.
3. The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
4. How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
5. Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.
6. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.
7. How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.

8. That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.
9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.
10. That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.
11. Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical health and fitness

Curriculum content:

1. The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.
3. The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
4. How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

Healthy eating

Curriculum content:

1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
2. Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.
3. The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
4. The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

Curriculum content:

1. The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.

Health protection and prevention

Curriculum content:

1. How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
2. About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.
4. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular check-ups at the dentist.
5. About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.

6. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.

Personal safety

Curriculum content:

1. About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.
2. How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.

Basic first aid

Curriculum content:

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
2. Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

Developing bodies

Curriculum content:

1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.

Secondary health and wellbeing curriculum content

Schools should continue to develop knowledge of topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

Mental wellbeing

Curriculum content:

1. How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
2. The benefits and importance of physical activity, sleep, time outdoors, community participation and volunteering or acts of kindness for mental wellbeing and happiness.
3. That happiness is linked to being connected to others. Pupils should be supported to understand what makes them feel happy and what makes them feel unhappy, while

recognising that loneliness can be for most people an inevitable part of life at times and is not something of which to be ashamed.

4. That worrying and feeling down are normal, can affect everyone at different times and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition, and that managing those feelings can be helped by seeing them as normal.
5. Characteristics of common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression), including carefully-presented factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental health conditions. This should not be discussed in a way that encourages normal feelings to be labelled as mental health conditions.
6. How to critically evaluate which activities will contribute to their overall wellbeing.
7. Understanding how to overcome anxiety or other barriers to participating in fun, enjoyable or rewarding activities – that it's possible to overcome those barriers using coping strategies, and that finding the courage to participate in activities which initially feel challenging may decrease anxiety over time rather than increasing it.
8. That gambling can lead to serious mental health harms, including anxiety, depression, and suicide, and that some gambling products are more likely to cause these harms than others.
9. That the co-occurrence of alcohol/drug use and poor mental health is common and that the relationship is bi-directional: mental health problems can increase the risk of alcohol/drug use, and alcohol/drug use can trigger mental health problems or exacerbate existing ones. That stopping smoking can improve people's mental health and decrease anxiety.

Wellbeing online

Curriculum content:

1. About the benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
2. 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; the impact that an over-reliance on online relationships, including relationships formed through social media, can have.
3. 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.
4. The risks related to online gambling and gambling-like content within gaming, including the accumulation of debt.
5. How advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online, understanding the prevalence of misinformation and disinformation online, including conspiracy theories.
6. The risks of illegal behaviours online, including drug and knife supply or the sale or purchasing of illicit drugs online.
7. The serious risks of viewing online content that promotes self-harm, suicide or violence, including how to safely report this material and how to access support after viewing it.

Physical health and fitness

Curriculum content:

1. The characteristics of a healthy lifestyle, including physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill-health, including cardiovascular ill-health.
2. Factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious health conditions.
3. That physical activity can promote wellbeing and combat stress.
4. The science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating

Curriculum content:

1. How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay, unhealthy weight gain, and cardiovascular disease.
2. The risks of unhealthy weight gain, including increased risks of cancer, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
3. The impacts of alcohol on diet and unhealthy weight gain.

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

Curriculum content:

1. The facts about which drugs are illegal, the risks of taking illegal drugs, including the increased risk of potent synthetic drugs being added to illegal drugs, the risks of illicit vapes containing drugs, illicit drugs and counterfeit medicines, and the potential health harms, including the link to poor mental health.
2. The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
3. The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption. What constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood, and the legal age of sale for alcohol in England. Understanding how to increase personal safety while drinking alcohol, including how to decrease the risks of having a drink spiked or of poisoning from potentially fatal substances such as methanol.
4. The physical and psychological consequences of problem-use of alcohol, including alcohol dependency.
5. The dangers of the misuse of prescribed and over-the-counter medicines.
6. The facts about the multiple serious harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer and cardiovascular disease), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
7. The facts about vaping, including the harms posed to young people, and the role that vapes can play in helping adult smokers to quit.

Health protection and prevention, and understanding the healthcare system

Curriculum content:

1. Personal hygiene, germs and how they are spread, including bacteria and viruses, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
2. Dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and cleaning between teeth, reducing consumption of sugar-containing food and drinks, and regular check-ups at the dentist.
3. How and when to self-care for minor ailments, and the role of pharmacists as knowledgeable healthcare professionals.
4. The importance of taking responsibility for their own health, and the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.

5. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination, immunisation and antimicrobial resistance. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.
6. The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, the importance of screen-free time before bed and removing phones from the bedroom, and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
7. The importance of healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy, including the importance of pre-conception health, including taking folic acid. The importance of pelvic floor health. Information on miscarriage and pregnancy loss, and how to access care and support.
8. How to navigate their local healthcare system: what a GP is; when to use A&E / minor injuries; accessing sexual health and family planning clinics; the role of local pharmacies; and how to seek help via local third sector partners which may have specialist services.
9. The concept of Gillick competence. That the legal age of medical consent is 16. That before this, a child's parents will have responsibility for consenting to medical treatment on their behalf unless they are Gillick competent to take this decision for themselves. Pupils should understand the circumstances in which someone over 16 may not be deemed to have capacity to make decisions about medical treatment.

Personal safety

Curriculum content:

1. How to identify risk and manage personal safety in increasingly independent situations, including around roads, railways – including level crossings - and water (including the water safety code), and in unfamiliar social or work settings (for example the first time a young person goes on holiday without their parents).
2. How to recognise and manage peer influence in relation to risk-taking behaviour and personal safety, including peer influence online and on social media.
3. How to develop key social and emotional skills that will increase pupils' safety from involvement in conflict and violence. These include skills to support self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making, as well as skills to recognise and manage peer pressure.
4. Understanding which trusted adults they can talk to if pupils are worried about violence and/or knife crime.
5. The law as it relates to knives and violence. Content and examples should relate to the local context and avoid using fear as an educational tool. Children should be taught that carrying weapons is uncommon, and should not be scared into the perception that many young people are carrying knives (which can lead to the misconception that they need to carry a knife too).
6. The risks and signs that they may be at risk of grooming or exploitation, and how to seek help where there is a concern.

Basic first aid

Curriculum content:

1. Basic treatment for common injuries and ailments.
2. Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
3. The purpose of defibrillators, when one might be needed and who can use them.

Developing bodies

Curriculum content:

1. The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.
2. The facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body, including brain development.
3. About menstrual and gynaecological health, including: what is an average period; period problems such as premenstrual syndrome; heavy menstrual bleeding; endometriosis; and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). When to seek help from healthcare professionals.
4. The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and menopause, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.