

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

2026

Trinity Academy Halifax

Lead: Hannah Tuffnell



Policy	Relationships, Sex and Health Education–2026
Assigned school(s)	Trinity Academy Halifax
Status	Statutory
Lead professional	Hannah Tuffnell
Date of review	September 2026
Date of next review	September 2027

1. Purpose of policy and guiding principles

- 1.1 The academy provides Relationships, Sex and Health Education as lifelong learning about moral, emotional, social and physical development. We define ‘relationships, sex and health education’ as learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health, as well as general health and wellbeing. It equips students with knowledge, values and skills to make informed and ethical decisions, develop safe and fulfilling relationships, take responsibility for their health, recognise harm and seek help. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity; this would be inappropriate teaching.
- 1.2 The programme follows these principles: meaningful student engagement; proactive engagement and transparency with parents; positive and respectful teaching; careful sequencing; age, stage and local relevance; skilled participative delivery; and a whole-Academy approach supported by safeguarding, behaviour, equality, SEND and online safety practice.
- 1.3 The academy complies with the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector equality duty. Teaching must not discriminate against or harass students. It

promotes equality and respect and covers the facts and law relating to all protected characteristics by the end of secondary education.

- 1.4** Sex and Relationships Education is delivered within the aims and philosophy of the trust and the agreed framework for the overall pastoral care of students.

2. Links with other policies or legislation

- 2.1** This policy has regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, July 2025, for introduction from 1 September 2026. It reflects the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, sections 80A of the Education Act 2002 and 403 of the Education Act 1996, and the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.2** It should be read with current Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children, the SEND Code of Practice and the Academy policies on safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, equality, SEND, online safety, curriculum and complaints.
- 2.3** RSHE is taught through Curriculum for Life and reinforced through Science, Humanities, PE, Health and Social Care, Computing, Religious Education and the College Time curriculum. Curriculum leaders coordinate provision to cover the statutory entitlement without unnecessary duplication.
- 2.4** The religious, moral, and social aspects are identified in the Schemes of Work and in accordance with the GCSE Religious Studies Syllabus and Diocese of Leeds Religious Studies Syllabus.

3. Aims and objectives of Relationships, Sex and Health Education

- 3.1** The academy aims to help students develop healthy lifestyles and keep themselves and others safe. Students learn about physical and mental health, developing bodies, relationships, online life, risk, consent, sexual and

reproductive health, substances, healthcare, personal safety and first aid. They learn when and how to seek reliable advice and support.

- 3.2** The academy aims to help students develop effective and fulfilling relationships and respect difference. Students learn about families, friendship, committed relationships, marriage and civil partnership, parenting, communication, kindness, conflict, relationship endings, equality, stereotypes, bullying, power, exploitation and the law.
- 3.3** The academy aims to develop self-esteem, confidence, independence and responsibility. Students practise assessing information and influence, setting boundaries, resisting pressure, making decisions, managing setbacks and reporting concerns.
- 3.4** By the end of secondary education, students will have been taught all secondary relationships, sex, health and wellbeing content in the statutory guidance, while continuing to develop relevant primary foundations. Appendix 1 gives the content categories. The lesson-level curriculum overview, available on request, identifies how and when content is taught and which lessons are classified as sex education.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1** The senior leader responsible for Curriculum and Teaching, and the Curriculum for Life Lead Teacher are responsible for planning and organising the programme. The senior leader provides strategic oversight, approves curriculum and resources, monitors quality and reports to governors.
- 4.2** The Curriculum for Life Lead coordinates with leaders of Science, Humanities, PE, Computing and other relevant subjects to secure progression, identify gaps and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- 4.3** The Curriculum for Life Lead is responsible for quality assuring the delivery of the programme and feeding this information back to the senior leader.
- 4.4** The SENDCO advises on accessibility and reasonable adjustments. The Designated Safeguarding Lead advises on vulnerability, local safeguarding

issues, disclosures and support. Teachers and visitors must deliver only agreed content and follow this policy and safeguarding procedures.

4.5 The Trust Board of Directors approves and reviews this policy and assures itself that students make progress, statutory content and materials align with the guidance, teaching is accessible to students with SEND, and parents receive clear information about content, materials, external providers and withdrawal rights.

4.6 Students review and reflect on learning and contribute through student voice. Parents contribute through proactive policy consultation. Their views inform decisions but do not give any person a veto over lawful curriculum content.

5. Delivery and continuity

5.1 All topics form part of a planned, progressive programme. Curriculum for Life is taught weekly, with relevant content reinforced elsewhere. Teaching builds on primary learning and is sequenced so that students develop knowledge and skills before they are likely to need them.

5.2 The Academy publishes a current year-by-year and term-by-term overview showing subject content, timing, responsible staff or subject area, external providers where used, and lessons classified as sex education.

5.3 Staff who have all received appropriate training deliver all work on Relationships, Sex and Health Education through a series of well-resourced Curriculum for Life lessons.

5.4 Teaching is participative and may include discussion, scenarios, skills practice, anonymous question boxes and assessment. Staff establish ground rules, use accurate and respectful language, distinguish fact and law from opinion or religious belief, and do not require personal disclosure.

5.5 Assessment and regular feedback identify what students know, remember and can apply and where further teaching or support is needed. The Academy may adjust timing or add content to respond to an emerging or local need.

- 5.6** Mixed-gender and mixed-ability groups are the norm. A particular topic may be taught in single-sex groups where this creates a safer or more effective environment, without stereotyping students, stigmatising boys or suggesting that girls are responsible for preventing abuse.

6. Values and framework

- 6.1** Teaching takes place in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment. It develops kindness, care, honesty, integrity, respect and responsibility. Language must not normalise harmful behaviour, reinforce stereotypes or stigmatise boys, girls, illness or difference.
- 6.2** Materials and teaching are factual, evidence based, medically and legally accurate, unbiased, age and stage appropriate, and sensitive to students' experiences. Applicable law is taught factually, including marriage and civil partnership, consent, domestic abuse, stalking, sexual offences, FGM, virginity testing, hymenoplasty, online harms, pornography, abortion, equality, substances, gambling, weapons, exploitation, hate crime, criminal responsibility and medical consent. The materials used will be reviewed regularly by the senior leader, responsible for Curriculum for Life, and Curriculum for Life Lead Teacher.
- 6.3** Teaching includes varied family arrangements and gives equal opportunity to explore stable and healthy same-sex relationships. Lesbian, gay and bisexual content is integrated across the programme, and sexual health teaching is relevant to all students.
- 6.4** Students are taught the facts and law about biological sex and gender reassignment. Staff recognise that beyond those facts and the law there is significant debate. They do not endorse a contested view as fact, teach as fact that all people have a gender identity, or present social transition as a simple solution to distress or discomfort. Bullying and disrespect are not acceptable. External resources on this topic are checked carefully and all materials are available on request.

- 6.5** Teaching is sensitive to students' religious backgrounds. The Academy may explain faith perspectives and its religious character, making clear when content reflects religious belief while teaching applicable law and respecting protected characteristics.
- 6.6** Teaching is accessible to students with SEND and prepares them for adulthood. Teachers make reasonable adjustments to language, pace, examples, grouping, communication and resources. Essential safeguarding knowledge is not removed. The curriculum recognises that some students with SEND may be more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, violence or bullying and may need more explicit teaching, repetition or targeted support.
- 6.7** Direct teaching about suicide prevention, self-harm or eating disorders will take place only where judged suitable. The Academy will consult appropriate health professionals, provide high-quality staff training, consider student maturity and parental views, use reliable materials and never discuss methods or instructions. Any concern or disclosure is managed through safeguarding procedures.

7. Information to parents

- 7.1** The policy and current curriculum overview are published on the Academy website. A free copy is provided to anyone who asks. The Academy proactively consults parents whenever it develops or reviews the policy, explains why effective RSHE promotes and protects student wellbeing, records the main themes raised and explains resulting decisions. More detailed information on the content of the programme can be requested by contacting the Curriculum for Life Lead Teacher.
- 7.2** Parents receive timely advance information about sex education and sensitive content, via the academy website. The Academy proactively provides a representative sample of planned resources and enables parents to view every RSHE curriculum material on request, including material supplied by an external organisation.

- 7.3** Access will normally be arranged within 10 school days through a secure parent portal, presentation or visit. If these are unsuitable, the Academy will provide another practical means of access, which may include copies to take home. Copyright affects the method of sharing, not whether materials may be viewed. Provider authorship will be acknowledged and parents may be required to agree not to copy or redistribute material except as copyright law permits.
- 7.4** The Academy offers opportunities for questions and discussion through information events, parents' evenings, online or recorded presentations, and one-to-one meetings on request. It provides practical guidance to help parents continue conversations at home. A concern about access or consultation may be raised through the Academy complaints procedure.
- 7.5** If the Academy is considering an external provider, it will seek parents' views on the organisation and proposed material. It will not accept a contractual term that prevents parents from seeing any content used with students.

8. Support for staff and students

- 8.1** Staff receive training appropriate to the content they teach, including safeguarding, managing questions and disclosures, adapting teaching for SEND and maintaining a safe classroom. Leaders give priority to staff who are new to RSHE or a sensitive topic and quality assure delivery.
- 8.2** No member of staff will be instructed against their wishes to deliver Relationships, Sex and Health Education.
- 8.3** RSHE may lead to safeguarding reports. Staff and visitors follow the Academy child protection policy and current Keeping Children Safe in Education, act immediately on concerns and report them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy. Staff follow mandatory reporting duties and never promise secrecy. Information is shared only with those who need it to safeguard the student.
- 8.4** Students are told how confidentiality works, what may happen if they report a concern and where to seek help inside and outside the Academy. Teaching

makes clear that anyone can experience sexual violence, the victim is never to blame and sexual violence often has a gendered component without suggesting all boys are perpetrators or all girls are victims.

8.5 The College Managers and Student Wellbeing Team, supported by the Curriculum for Life Lead Teacher, provide or arrange support. Staff challenge harmful ideas, including sexism, misogyny and homophobia, while treating students with dignity. Concerns about a student experiencing or perpetrating harm are managed under safeguarding procedures.

8.6 Teachers answer questions honestly, factually and at an age and stage appropriate level. They may answer privately, defer while seeking guidance, invite a student to speak with a parent or trusted adult, or signpost safe support. A question will not be answered to the whole class where this would be inappropriate, unsafe, outside the planned curriculum or likely to identify personal circumstances.

8.7 If a student asks about sex education from which they have been withdrawn, staff prioritise safety and access to reliable information. They may encourage discussion with a parent or trusted adult and signpost medically accurate or safeguarding support. Staff recognise that leaving a question wholly unanswered may lead a student to unsafe sources. Any disclosure or welfare concern is referred under safeguarding procedures.

9. Organisational aspects of the Relationships Sex and Health Education programme

9.1 The Academy covers all statutory secondary content by the end of secondary education. Appendix 1 organises it under families; respectful relationships; online safety and awareness; being safe; intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health; mental wellbeing; wellbeing online; physical health and fitness; healthy eating; drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping; health protection and the healthcare system; personal safety; basic first aid; and developing bodies.

- 9.2** The detailed annual overview identifies lesson titles, intended outcomes, year group and term, subject or teacher, resources, external providers and the distinction between relationships, health, science and sex education. Leaders maintain this overview as the operational record of how and when the statutory curriculum is taught.

10. Health professionals

- 10.1** Health professionals and other external organisations may enhance the programme through specialist knowledge, but the Academy remains responsible for the content, resources and way students are taught.
- 10.2** Before engagement, the Academy checks credentials, lesson plans, accuracy, impartiality, age and stage suitability, SEND accessibility and every resource. It is cautious about organisations with a commercial interest in harmful products or a strong partisan view on a contested topic. All materials remain available to parents on request.
- 10.3** The Academy agrees confidentiality and safeguarding arrangements in advance. The visitor understands how to respond to a report or concern, and an Academy professional remains able to observe or support delivery.

11. Parental requests

- 11.1** Requests to view materials should be sent to the Curriculum for Life Lead Teacher. They will be handled as set out in section 7 and responded to positively without unnecessary delay.
- 11.2** A parent may request that their child is withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education, health education or the Science National Curriculum, including puberty or sexual reproduction.
- 11.3** The parent should send a written request to the Principal identifying the lesson or content. Appendix 2 may be used, but the form is not required. Before deciding, the Principal or delegated senior leader will offer a discussion with the parent and, where appropriate, the student. The discussion will clarify the

curriculum, the benefits of participation and possible detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social or emotional impact and the risk of receiving an inaccurate account from peers.

- 11.4** The Principal will grant the request unless exceptional circumstances justify refusal, for example safeguarding concerns or the student's specific vulnerability. The Academy records the request, discussion, student's views where appropriate, decision, reasons, dates, content and review arrangements. Any refusal is reasoned and communicated in writing.
- 11.5** During withdrawal, the student receives appropriate and purposeful education in a suitable supervised setting. The arrangement will not shame the student. A parent is not required to teach the omitted content at home as a condition of withdrawal. A withdrawal does not affect access to confidential health or safeguarding services, subject to law and professional duties.
- 11.6** From three terms before the student turns 16, the student may opt back into sex education despite an earlier parental request. The Academy ensures students know this right and provides the teaching in sufficient time before the student turns 16, including suitable catch-up where needed. Arrangements are reviewed if the curriculum or student's circumstances change.
- 11.7** Please be aware that a parent's choice to withdraw a child from sex education does not affect the child's right to use confidential health services provided at the school or elsewhere.

12. Monitoring and evaluation of the Relationships Sex and Health Education policy

12.1 Monitoring and evaluation include:

- review of curriculum coverage, sequencing, lesson materials and external providers;
- lesson visits, assessment and feedback on student progress;
- student, staff and parent feedback, including consultation themes;

- review of participation, SEND access and targeted support;
- review of relevant safeguarding and pastoral themes without identifying students;
- review of requests to view materials, withdrawal requests and alternative education;
- reports by the senior leader responsible for Curriculum for Life to the Local Governing Board.

12.3 The policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner following statutory or legal change, a material curriculum change, a significant safeguarding issue, evidence of unmet student need or a change in external provision. Parents and students are meaningfully engaged in review. The Trust Board of Directors approves the final policy, which is then published and made available free of charge.

Appendix 1: Categorisation of topics within the Curriculum for Life programme

A.1 The Academy's lesson-level curriculum overview gives the precise year and term for each topic and identifies lessons classified as sex education. At Trinity Academy Halifax, these topics are taught through the lens of relationships, health and legal education. The matrix below provides the policy-level categorisation. All statutory secondary content is covered by the end of secondary education.

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Families: different types of relationships	Y				
Families: relationships contributing to wellbeing and bringing up children	Y				
Families: the law and legal right including civil partnerships and cohabitation.	Y				Y
Families: 'common law marriage' myth	Y				Y
Families: forced marriage	Y				Y
Families: changing relationships over time	Y				
Families: parenting and early child development	Y				
Families: recognising unsafe relationships and know where to seek help	Y				

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Relationships: positive relationships, online and offline, including romantic	Y				
Relationships: impact on others, legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality	Y				Y
Relationships: self-esteem, positive relationships and friendships	Y				
Relationships: tolerance of beliefs	Y				Y
Relationships: respectful and kind relationships, including skills for communicating respectfully with strangers	Y				
Relationships: bullying	Y			Y	Y
Relationships: ending relationships	Y				
Relationships: consent	Y		Y	Y	Y
Relationships: stereotypes, misogyny and prejudice	Y			Y	Y
Relationships: inequalities of power impacting behaviour impacting relationships	Y		Y	Y	Y

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Relationships: pornography, harmful sexual behaviours	Y		Y		Y
Relationships: sub-cultures influencing sexual norms, incels	Y		Y	Y	Y
Online safety: rights and responsibilities online					Y
Online safety: risks of sharing personal information and locations				Y	Y
Online safety: social media, AI generated content					Y
Online safety: legal risks of sharing images	Y		Y	Y	Y
Online safety: law relating to sharing images of under 18s, including AI-created content			Y		Y
Online safety: reporting concerns about circulated materials				Y	Y
Online safety: deepfakes				Y	Y
Online safety: harmful content and seeking support				Y	Y
Online safety: social media and conflict				Y	Y

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Online safety: technology or social media use for harmful behaviours	Y			Y	Y
Online safety: pornography and depictions of unrealistic sexual behaviours and misogynistic attitudes	Y		Y		Y
Online safety: storing and sharing of data online	Y				
Online safety: use of personal data, including for commercial purposes	Y			Y	
Online safety: scams, sextortion	Y		Y	Y	Y
Online safety: AI chatbots	Y				
Being safe: consent and boundaries in relationships	Y		Y	Y	Y
Being safe: sexual pressure	Y		Y	Y	Y
Being safe: safety in relationships and seeking support	Y				Y
Being safe: personal safety and reporting harmful behaviour	Y		Y	Y	Y
Being safe: sexual harassment including sexual violence, sexual	Y		Y	Y	Y

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
images, public sexual harassment and upskirting					
Being safe: laws relating to rape, sexual assault and harmful sexual behaviour	Y		Y	Y	Y
Being safe: laws relating to domestic abuse	Y			Y	Y
Being safe: laws relating to sexual and criminal exploitation, abuse, grooming and financial exploitation	Y		Y	Y	Y
Being safe: FGM, virginity testing and hymenoplasty	Y			Y	Y
Being safe: strangulation and suffocation risks and law	Y		Y	Y	Y
Being safe: emotional and physical harm caused by pornography	Y		Y	Y	Y
Being safe: seeking support for worrying or abusive behaviour	Y		Y	Y	Y
Intimate relationships: age of consent, including the law	Y		Y	Y	Y
Intimate relationships: sexual consent and capacity	Y		Y	Y	Y

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Intimate relationships: some sexual behaviours can be harmful	Y		Y	Y	Y
Intimate relationships: contraceptive choices	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Intimate relationships: choices relating to pregnancy	Y			Y	
Intimate relationships: STIs including HIV, PrEP and PEP	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Intimate relationships: alcohol and drugs leading to risky sexual behaviour	Y		Y	Y	
Intimate relationships: seeking support for concerns in a sexual relationship	Y		Y	Y	
Intimate relationships: reproductive health advice and treatment	Y		Y	Y	
Mental wellbeing: talking about emotions and managing self	Y			Y	
Mental wellbeing: benefits of physical activity	Y			Y	
Mental wellbeing: happiness is linked to being connected	Y			Y	

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Mental wellbeing: characteristics of common types of mental ill health	Y			Y	
Mental wellbeing: evaluating activities which contribute to wellbeing	Y			Y	
Mental wellbeing: overcoming anxiety	Y			Y	
Mental wellbeing: gambling and impact on mental health				Y	
Mental wellbeing: impact of alcohol and drug use on mental health				Y	
Wellbeing online: limiting time online				Y	
Wellbeing online: online v physical world – unhealthy comparisons and unrealistic expectations				Y	
Wellbeing online: identifying harmful behaviours online				Y	Y
Wellbeing online: risks relating to online gambling including debt				Y	
Wellbeing online: targeted advertising, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories				Y	

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Wellbeing online: illegal behaviours online including drug and knife supply				Y	Y
Wellbeing online: risks of online content including self-harm, suicide or violence				Y	Y
Physical health: healthy lifestyle and weight		Y		Y	
Physical health: prevalence of serious health conditions		Y		Y	
Physical health: physical activity promoting wellbeing and combatting stress		Y		Y	
Physical health: blood, organ and stem cell donation		Y		Y	
Healthy eating: links between poor diet and health risks		Y		Y	
Healthy eating: risks of unhealthy weight gain		Y		Y	
Healthy eating: impacts of alcohol on diet		Y		Y	Y
Drugs/alcohol: illegal drugs		Y		Y	Y
Drugs/alcohol: law relating to supply and possession of illegal substances					Y

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Drugs/alcohol: risks of alcohol		Y		Y	Y
Drugs/alcohol: misuse of prescribed and over-the-counter medications		Y		Y	
Drugs/alcohol: harms from tobacco		Y		Y	
Drugs/alcohol: vaping		Y		Y	Y
Health protection: personal hygiene, spreading of germs and antibiotics		Y		Y	
Health protection: dental health		Y		Y	
Health protection: self-care for minor ailments and the role of pharmacists				Y	
Health protection: self-examination and screening				Y	
Health protection: scientific evidence relating to vaccinations		Y		Y	
Health protection: sleep		Y		Y	
Health protection: health behaviours before and during pregnancy		Y		Y	
Health protection: navigating local healthcare				Y	

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
systems (GPs, A&E, sexual health)					
Health protection: Gillick competence				Y	Y
Personal safety: risks around roads, railways and water				Y	
Personal safety: peer influence and risk-taking behaviour				Y	
Personal safety: developing social and emotional skills	Y			Y	
Personal safety: identifying trusted adults	Y			Y	
Personal safety: laws relating to knives and violence				Y	Y
Personal safety: risks of grooming and exploitation	Y			Y	
First aid: basic treatment for common injuries				Y	
First aid: CPR and defibrillators				Y	
Developing bodies: changes to male and female bodies		Y		Y	
Developing bodies: facts about puberty		Y		Y	

Key content from statutory guidance	Relationships	Science	Sex education	Health	Law
Developing bodies: menstrual and gynaecological health		Y		Y	
Developing bodies: reproductive health including fertility and menopause		Y		Y	

Appendix B: Sex Education request for withdrawal form

B.1 This form is optional. A written request in another form will be considered in the same way.

Name of student	
Year group	
Parent or carer name	
Contact details	
Sex education lesson or content concerned	
Information for the Principal to consider	
Date and attendees of discussion	
Student's views where appropriate	
Decision and reasons	Granted in full / granted in part / refused in exceptional circumstances
Alternative purposeful education and supervision	
Review date and opt-back-in date	
Parent or carer signature and date	
Decision maker signature and date	