



## **Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy**

This policy is applicable to all pupils, staff, parents and carers of Tulip Academy Spalding.

This school policy will be made available to parents on the school's website and hard copies will be available from the office on request.

### **1. STATEMENT OF INTENT**

At Tulip Academy Spalding we teach Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) so that pupils can make responsible, safe and well-informed choices, develop healthy relationships, and build the knowledge, skills and self-efficacy they need for life. RSHE promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development at school and in society.

We deliver an age- and stage-appropriate, sequenced, evidence-based curriculum that reflects our pupils' needs, voices and contexts. We proactively address issues in a timely way, including online risks, personal safety, respect and inclusion, and we do so through high-quality teaching, accessible resources and partnerships with families and specialist agencies where appropriate.

### **2. STATUTORY STATUS AND SCOPE**

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education. Relationships Education is compulsory in primary; Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory in secondary; Health Education is compulsory in all state-funded schools. Independent schools must deliver PSHE reflecting this guidance.

This policy reflects the 2019 statutory guidance, which remains legally binding until 31 August 2026, and prepares the Academy for the updated RSHE guidance published July 2025 for introduction from 1 September 2026. The policy applies to all pupils.

### **3. AIMS**

Our RSHE aims are to enable pupils to:

1. Understand and respect their bodies, including the changes of puberty, without fear or confusion.
2. Build positive, healthy and safe relationships appropriate to age and development, on- and offline.
3. Recognise different families (including same-sex parents) and value kindness, dignity and respect.
4. Develop emotional literacy, resilience and help-seeking strategies, including around mental wellbeing.
5. Understand consent, boundaries and the law; know that harassment, sexual violence and exploitation are always unacceptable.
6. Support our students to have positive self-esteem and body image, and to understand the influences and pressures around them.
7. Navigate online life safely, including understanding risks related to pornography, harmful influencers, scams and financial harms.
8. Explore the critical thinking as part of decision making; exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas and the consequences of choice making.
9. Promote a whole-school environment and ethos that encourages open, age-appropriate discussion without embarrassment, and supports pupils in developing the confidence to communicate and reflect on their feelings regarding relationships and sex.
10. Learn personal safety in the community (roads, rail, water, public spaces) and basic first aid.
11. Access reliable information and services, and know how to seek support for themselves or others.

### **4. WHAT IS RSHE?**

At Tulip Academy Spalding, we use the following terms in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance:

#### **4.1 RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION (Primary)**

Relationships Education is a compulsory part of the curriculum for all primary-aged pupils. It teaches the fundamental building blocks needed to form healthy, safe and respectful relationships with family, friends and peers. It covers:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

These areas form the core statutory content for all primary pupils.

For pupils following our Semi-Formal and Formal Lower Pathways, content is adapted to be developmentally appropriate, highly structured and visually supported, ensuring all pupils can access and apply core relationship concepts.

## **4.2 RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) (Secondary)**

In secondary education, pupils receive Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), which is statutory and includes both:

- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) – covering families, respectful relationships (including friendships and intimate relationships), online and media influences, consent, sexual health and the law; and
- Health Education – covering mental wellbeing, physical health, puberty, health and prevention, online safety, basic first aid and changing adolescent body.

Across our secondary phase, RSHE is adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND through the use of visual supports, simplified language, modelling, repetition and personalised teaching approaches, ensuring that all pupils can access, understand and apply RSHE content at a developmentally appropriate level

Sex education becomes a statutory requirement at secondary level, as set out in legislation and the DfE RSHE guidance. Parents retain the right to request withdrawal from sex education only (not Relationships or Health content).

## **4.3 HEALTH EDUCATION (Primary & Secondary)**

Health Education is compulsory in both primary and secondary phases and supports pupils to understand physical and mental wellbeing, how to manage health needs, and how to stay safe online and offline. It includes menstruation, puberty, mental health, healthy lifestyles, and prevention of illness.

## **5. CORE COMPONENTS OF RSHE**

RSHE at Tulip Academy Spalding develops pupils' attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills in line with statutory guidance.

This ensures learning is holistic, age-appropriate and prepares pupils for life within and beyond school.

### **5.1 ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

Pupils learn to:

- Understand and reflect on personal values, moral considerations and individual conscience.
- Recognise the importance of kindness, respect, empathy and care in all relationships (familial, platonic and intimate).

- Understand the value of stable, loving relationships, including marriage, while recognising and respecting different family structures (including same-sex parents).
- Consider moral dilemmas, link actions to consequences, and develop critical thinking.
- Build respect for diversity and difference, and challenge discriminatory or harmful attitudes.
- Recognise why harassment, misogyny, coercion, and sexual violence are always unacceptable.

## **5.2 KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING**

- Pupils gain knowledge about:
  - Physical development, body changes and puberty at a developmentally appropriate level.
  - Healthy friendships and relationships, including consent, boundaries and communication.
  - Human reproduction and sexual health (secondary), including contraception options and local/national support services.
  - The importance and advantages of delaying sexual activity and avoiding unplanned pregnancy.
  - Emotions, mental wellbeing, grief and loss, and how to access help when needed.
  - Laws relating to:
    - sexual consent
    - sexual exploitation, grooming and coercion
    - domestic abuse
    - rape & sexual harassment
    - forced marriage and honour-based violence
    - FGM
 (All taught in a factual, safeguarding-focused way.)
  - Online relationships, online safety and digital risks including pornography, harmful influencers, gaming risks, scams and financial exploitation.
  - Personal safety in public spaces (roads, rail, water).

## **5.3 PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS**

Pupils develop skills to:

- Manage emotions, including strategies for regulation, resilience and help-seeking.
- Build self-esteem, confidence, assertiveness and an understanding of personal boundaries.
- Form and maintain safe, respectful and healthy relationships across different contexts.
- Empathise with others and respect the rights and feelings of those around them.

- Make informed, safe and responsible decisions, understanding the consequences of their choices.
- Navigate online communication safely and understand that expectations of behaviour are the same online as offline.
- Identify when they or others may be unsafe (including around suicide risk) and know how to seek support from trusted adults or services

## **6. CURRICULUM: COVERAGE AND PROGRESSION**

Through effective organisation and delivery of the RSE, the school will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

RSHE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.

### **6.1 PREFORMAL AND INFORMAL CURRICULUM PATHWAY**

For pupils following the Pre-Formal and Informal curriculum pathways, RSHE is not delivered as a discrete subject, but is fully embedded throughout the school day, personalised to each pupil's developmental stage, communication profile and SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) needs. This approach ensures pupils access RSHE content in meaningful, practical and consistent contexts.

Learning is aligned closely with pupils' EHCP outcomes, particularly those relating to communication, interaction, self-care, independence, emotional regulation and social development. RSHE concepts are reinforced through routines, experiences, and supported interactions, enabling pupils to develop functional, transferable skills that support safety, wellbeing and independence.

This embedded approach ensures pupils build foundational RSHE skills before progressing to more structured learning

### **6.2 SEMIFORMAL CURRICULUM PATHWAY**

The curriculum will be delivered by class teachers throughout the academic year with each term focusing on a particular element of Relationships, Sex and/or Health Education. The curriculum will be taught in a clear, empathetic manner using appropriate resources and lesson activities. All staff will adhere to the policy and statutory guidance. Outside agencies will work collaboratively with parents, staff and pupils where necessary to support with the teaching of sensitive issues or to signpost where advice, services and information can be found.

### **6.3 FORMAL CURRICULUM PATHWAY**

The curriculum will be delivered by class teachers throughout the academic year. The curriculum offer is combined and delivered alongside the PSHE curriculum for pupils in the lower and middle phase of the school. As pupils transition into the upper school curriculum expectations for PSHE and RSE are taught as two separate lessons. The curriculum will be taught in a clear, empathetic manner using appropriate resources and lesson activities. All staff will adhere to the policy and statutory guidance. Outside agencies will work collaboratively with parents, staff and pupils where necessary to support with the teaching of sensitive issues or to signpost where advice, services and information can be found.

## **7. WHAT EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION LOOKS LIKE**

Effective RSHE at Tulip Academy Spalding supports pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and values they need to form healthy, safe and respectful relationships, both online and offline. It is preventative, safeguarding-focused and age- and stage-appropriate, helping pupils understand themselves, others and the world around them.

Effective RSHE:

- Does not encourage early sexual activity. Instead, it helps pupils understand human development, sexuality and emotions in a safe, factual and age-appropriate way.
- Builds confidence and self-esteem by helping pupils understand changes in their bodies, manage feelings and make safe choices.
- Promotes respect for self and others, supporting pupils to understand consent, boundaries, and how healthy relationships are built and maintained.
- Prepares pupils to manage real-life pressures, including those in digital spaces such as social media, gaming, online relationships and exposure to harmful content.
- Supports pupils to delay sexual activity until they feel ready and understand the emotional, physical and legal implications.
- Strengthens safeguarding by teaching pupils how to recognise unsafe situations, sexual harassment and violence, coercion, exploitation, harmful influencers and abuse, and how to seek help.
- Develops critical thinking, helping pupils to question harmful norms, manage peer pressure and understand the consequences of decisions.
- Is inclusive and non-judgemental, recognising diverse families, including same-sex parents, and addressing the facts of sex and gender reassignment in line with equality law.
- Is delivered as part of a planned and sequenced personal development curriculum, integrated with PSHE, safeguarding, online safety and mental wellbeing education.
- Acknowledges early puberty, ensuring pupils who experience changes sooner receive timely, sensitive and individualised support.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory from age 11 onwards; however, the Academy recognises that some pupils may require earlier intervention in response to their developmental stage. Teaching is always factual, respectful and does not promote any sexual orientation, identity or early sexual activity.

The school will ensure it delivers teaching on sensitive topics, e.g. the body, in a way that is appropriate and sensitive to the various needs of the school community, e.g. cultural background. All teaching and resources will be assessed by the RSE subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any pupils with SEND, if applicable.

Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning. Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of pupils. Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning.

Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programmes accordingly. Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and honestly.

For those individuals who may be more vulnerable (through, for instance, being on the Child Protection Register), individual counselling and support will be offered within school and, if necessary, specialist agencies contacted for their support outside school. Parents and Carers will be notified at the start of any planned Relationships and Sex Education provision or if/whenever any issues arise.

In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.

Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.

## **8. ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING ON LEARNING**

In Relationships and Sex Education lessons, teachers will assess progress both formatively (with comments made on student work for instance) and summative (by way of short, structured assessment tasks at the end of a topic for instance). Progress and attainment within this subject will be recorded through the schools current assessment protocols; Personal Development Steps and personalised EHCP outcomes where appropriate for the individual.

Teachers may wish to make additional formal assessments by picking key learning objectives for selected lessons and evaluate learning against them. It is not just

acquired facts that will be assessed, students' progress in attaining new skills and reflecting on values will also be monitored.

## **9. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

We consult parents on policy and curriculum; publish overviews on our website; and offer information sessions/materials so parents know what is taught and when. Parents are encouraged to discuss RSHE with their child and to contact the RSHE Lead with any questions or sensitivities.

## **10. RIGHT TO REQUEST WITHDRAWAL FROM SEX EDUCATION (secondary)**

Parents/carers may request withdrawal from sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE (secondary), but not from Relationships Education or Health Education. The Headteacher meets with the parent (and the pupil where appropriate) to discuss the request and the benefits of participation. All such requests and decisions are documented.

## **11. SAFEGUARDING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

- RSHE is part of our safeguarding approach. Staff are alert to disclosures and concerns and follow KCSIE and school procedures. No promise of confidentiality can be given if a pupil is at risk of harm.
- Sensitive topics (e.g., self-harm, suicide, harassment, sexual violence) are taught safely and preventatively by trained staff. Any concern triggers immediate referral to the DSL.
- Pupils are taught how to report abuse, harassment and harmful content, online and offline, and how to seek support.

## **12. STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

Staff access ongoing CPD on RSHE content and pedagogy, adaptive teaching, safeguarding (including sexual harassment/violence) and suicide prevention (secondary). The RSHE Lead quality-assures resources, lessons and visitor inputs, and supports staff with planning and parent communication.

## **13. MANAGING QUESTIONS AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

Teachers establish boundaries for questions, use a question box where helpful, and answer in line with school values, the law and the curriculum. Where questions fall outside the taught content or a pupil appears distressed, staff follow the safeguarding policy and liaise with parents as appropriate.

## **14. USE OF RESOURCES AND MATERIALS**

All materials are checked for accuracy, age/stage suitability, inclusive representation and copyright. We do not use inappropriate or explicit materials. Online access during RSHE is supervised and filtered in line with our Online Safety policy.

## **15. SUPPORTING PUPILS WHO ARE IN RELATIONSHIPS**

At Tulip Academy Spalding, we recognise that pupils may develop feelings or attachments as part of normal social and emotional development. We support pupils, parents and carers to ensure any developing relationships are safe, respectful and appropriate to each pupil's age, developmental level and communication needs.

Staff will guide pupils to:

- Understand personal space and appropriate behaviour in school
- Show respect and kindness towards others
- Recognise simple boundaries

If a pupil in a relationship displays behaviour that raises any concern, staff will:

1. Report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
2. Inform parents/carers as appropriate
3. Put in place support to help pupils understand expectations and stay safe

Our priority is to safeguard all pupils while helping them build positive social skills, healthy peer interactions and the ability to recognise when a situation is unsafe or uncomfortable.

## **16. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The RSHE Lead and SLT will monitor delivery (planning scrutiny, observation, pupil/parent voice, assessment information). Findings are reported to the Headteacher and Governing Body termly and inform continuous improvement. This policy will be reviewed annually.