

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Mission Statement

Christ is at the heart of our community, where everyone is known and loved. In fulfilling our mission we are a school of prayer. We live as a community of love, peace and reconciliation, valuing everyone's dignity as a child of God to promote and celebrate the growth and achievement of the whole person

Our RSHE curriculum reflects this mission, forming young people who are respectful, compassionate, informed and prepared for life in modern Britain, while remaining rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church.

RSHE contributes significantly to the school's wider Personal Development programme, supporting pupils to develop character, resilience, confidence, respect, wellbeing, responsible citizenship and preparation for adult life.

1. Aims of the Policy

Through RSHE, we seek to:

- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social, emotional and physical development
- Promote the dignity of every human person, made in the image of God
- Enable pupils to form healthy, respectful and loving relationships
- Equip pupils with knowledge to make informed and responsible decisions
- Develop resilience, confidence and self-worth
- Safeguard pupils by helping them recognise risk, abuse and exploitation
- Promote equality, inclusion and respect for all in line with British law
- Prepare pupils for adult life, employment and responsible citizenship

2. Statutory Framework

This policy complies with the Department for Education statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025), which applies from 1 September 2026.

The school has reviewed and updated its RSHE provision for the 2026-27 academic year in line with the revised statutory guidance.

The policy also reflects:

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- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition, reviewed annually)
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Online Safety Act
- Catholic Education Service guidance
- Archdiocese of Birmingham guidance

Statutory Status

- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE): statutory for pupils receiving secondary education
- Health Education: statutory
- Parents have a statutory right to request withdrawal from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of RSE, subject to the arrangements set out in section 12.

3. Definition of RSHE and Personal Development

RSHE is lifelong learning about relationships, emotional wellbeing, sexual health, safety and human dignity.

Our approach integrates:

- Catholic teaching on relationships, love and human dignity
- Scientific knowledge and factual accuracy
- Safeguarding principles
- Respect for diversity and the law

4. Curriculum Intent and Content

The curriculum is age-appropriate, inclusive and developmentally sequenced from Year 7 to Year 13.

4.1 Relationships

Pupils learn about:

- Healthy friendships and relationships
- Family life and stable relationships

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- Respect, dignity and equality
- Consent, boundaries and autonomy
- Challenging abuse, coercion and exploitation
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- How to seek help and support
- How to recognise and challenge misogyny, misandry and other forms of prejudice
- Prejudice, harmful stereotypes, discriminatory behaviour
- Harmful online influences and how they may negatively affect relationships, wellbeing and respect for others

4.2 Health Education

Pupils learn about:

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Resilience and coping strategies
- Healthy lifestyles (diet, exercise, sleep)
- Substance misuse and addiction
- Personal hygiene and puberty
- Body image and self-esteem
- Basic first aid and safety

4.3 Sex Education

Delivered in line with Catholic teaching while ensuring factual and statutory compliance:

- Human reproduction
- Fertility, pregnancy and birth
- Contraception and sexual health
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Consent and healthy sexual relationships
- Parenthood and family life

4.4 Online Safety

Pupils are taught about:

- Safe online behaviour

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- Digital footprints and privacy
- Cyberbullying and online abuse
- Pornography and unrealistic content
- Image sharing and exploitation
- Online grooming and harmful influences
- Misinformation and manipulation

4.5 Equality and Inclusion

Pupils are taught about the protected characteristics defined within the Equality Act 2010 and the importance of treating all people with dignity and respect.

Teaching reflects:

- The Equality Act 2010 and protected characteristics
- Respect for all individuals and communities
- Age-appropriate teaching about LGBTQ+ relationships
- The harmful impact of prejudice, discrimination and bullying

All teaching is rooted in Catholic values while ensuring pupils understand and respect the law and the diversity of modern society.

5. Safeguarding

RSHE is a key element of the school's preventative safeguarding curriculum.

Pupils are taught to:

- Recognise unsafe situations
- Understand consent and personal boundaries
- Identify abuse, including child-on-child abuse
- Recognise exploitation, coercion and grooming
- Understand online risks and harms
- Know how to seek help

Staff will not guarantee confidentiality. Any safeguarding concerns will be managed in line with the school's safeguarding policy and statutory guidance.

6. Delivery of the Curriculum

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RSHE is delivered through a planned, sequenced programme. From September 2026, the principal delivery model is:

- Years 7-10: timetabled PSHE lessons, through which the statutory RSHE curriculum is delivered and morning mission programme.
- Year 11: RSHE/PSHE is delivered through planned drop-down days during 2026-27 and the morning mission programme. Year 11 will move to timetabled curriculum PSHE lessons from September 2027.
- Years 12-13: timetabled PSHE lessons.
- Relevant statutory content is also reinforced through appropriate curriculum areas, including Religious Education, Science, Computing and Physical Education, and through the wider personal development and safeguarding curriculum where appropriate.



The school uses Ten Ten Resources to support the delivery of the RSE elements of RSHE. Ten Ten is used in accordance with the requirements and guidance of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. School leaders ensure that resources are age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and suitable for pupils, and map provision against the Department for Education statutory RSHE requirements to ensure that all required content is taught accurately and in a carefully sequenced way.

A curriculum overview for RSHE/PSHE across Years 7–13 is published on the school website, providing parents and carers with information about what is taught and when. The school uses Ten Ten Resources to support the delivery of RSE, and parents and carers are provided with access to relevant Ten Ten parent resources. Where appropriate, letters are sent in advance to identify relevant RSHE sessions and provide further information about the content to be taught.

7. Inclusion and SEND

The RSHE curriculum is fully inclusive and accessible to all pupils. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure pupils with SEND can access and understand all aspects of the RSHE curriculum at an appropriate developmental level.

Adaptations include:

- Differentiated materials
- Scaffolding and adapted language
- Visual supports
- Additional pastoral support

Particular consideration is given to vulnerable pupils and those with safeguarding needs

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8. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- Approve and review policy
- Ensure statutory compliance
- Monitor impact and effectiveness

Headteacher

- Overall responsibility for implementation

RSHE Lead (Assistant Headteacher – Personal Development and RSHE Lead)

- Curriculum design and sequencing
- Staff training and support
- Quality assurance
- Monitoring and evaluation

Staff

- Deliver RSHE safely and effectively
- Model respectful relationships
- Follow safeguarding procedures

All staff delivering RSHE receive appropriate training

9. External Visitors

External agencies and visitors may support curriculum delivery where appropriate.

All external contributors:

- are quality assured by the school
- must align with the school ethos and statutory guidance
- work under the supervision of school staff
- must follow safeguarding procedures

10. Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

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Pupil learning is assessed through:

- Discussion and reflection
- Formative assessment
- Low-stakes quizzes

The school evaluates the impact of RSHE through:

- Lesson observations
- Evidence of pupils' knowledge retention and application
- Pupil voice
- Attendance at curriculum activities
- Safeguarding data
- Behaviour trends

The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure compliance and relevance.

11. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are the primary educators of their children.

The school works in partnership with families by:

- Providing clear curriculum information about what is taught and when
- Access to resources (including TenTen portal)
- Opportunities for consultation

Parents may access curriculum materials through the school website or by contacting the school directly. The school uses the TenTen parent portal to support parental engagement with RSE.

12. Right to Withdraw

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education, Health Education or relevant science curriculum content.

Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher. Before a decision is finalised, a senior leader will normally discuss the request with the parent or carer and, where appropriate, the pupil, to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the

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implications of withdrawal. Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the request up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16.



From three terms before the pupil turns 16, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education rather than remain withdrawn, the school will make arrangements for this to take place during one of those terms. A pupil who is withdrawn will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

13. Answering Questions and Managing Sensitive Issues

RSHE lessons are delivered within a safe and respectful environment.

Teachers will:

- use age-appropriate language
- answer questions factually and sensitively
- establish clear ground rules
- avoid personal disclosures
- challenge misinformation appropriately

Pupils may ask anonymous questions where appropriate.

Where questions raise safeguarding concerns, staff will follow the school safeguarding procedures.

14. Policy Development and Review

This policy is developed and reviewed with appropriate consultation, including parents and carers, and informed by the views of governors, staff and pupils.

The policy is reviewed annually, or sooner in response to changes in statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements or diocesan expectations.

The impact of this policy is that pupils leave St Thomas More Catholic School:

- Prepared for adult life
- Able to form healthy relationships
- Respectful of others
- Informed, safe and resilient
- Grounded in Catholic values and moral understanding





Appendix I – Example letter RSE

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing in advance of the forthcoming RSHE provision for Year ____ students on _____ to outline the next phase of the curriculum. This forms part of the statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum and plays an important role in promoting pupils' wellbeing and safeguarding.

RSHE is delivered within the theological, spiritual and moral framework of the Catholic tradition and in line with the Department for Education statutory guidance applying from September 2026. Our approach is shaped by the teachings of the Catholic Church while ensuring pupils receive the factual, age-appropriate and legally required content. Parents and carers are the first educators of their children, and the school seeks to work in partnership with families.

To support this partnership, the school uses Ten Ten Resources for RSE in line with diocesan guidance. Parents and carers will be provided with appropriate information about the curriculum, including what is taught and when, and how they can access further information or view relevant materials. During this provision, Year ____ students will study _____.

I encourage all parents to use the portal so that you can remain fully informed and continue discussions with your child at home.

Statutory guidance allows parents and carers to request withdrawal from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of RSE, but not from Relationships Education, Health Education or relevant science curriculum content. For the upcoming provision, this applies to _____ only. Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher. Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect a parental request up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. From that point, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education, the school will make arrangements for this during one of those terms.

We maintain high expectations for all pupils and aim to deliver each lesson with sensitivity and respect. As with all RSHE content, any safeguarding concerns that arise will be managed in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

Yours sincerely,

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