Tas Valley Church Schools Federation

RSHE Policy

Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:	**Tas Valley Federation**
On:	**12 May 2026**
Chair of Governors:	**Diane Perry-Yates**
Last updated:	**May 2026**

Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) policy

1. Policy context and rationale

1.1 This policy explains the Tas Valley Federation's approach to teaching Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). It has been subject to thorough consultation with the Federation community including pupils, parents/carers, staff, school governors and, where relevant, appropriate members of the wider community such as medical professionals and faith leaders. Pupil consultation has ensured that the needs of all pupils can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate RSHE curriculum that addresses relevant issues, informed by analysis of public health data and pupil priorities. The main method of consultation is via family consultation letter. Pupils were also consulted via questionnaire and through discussion at School Council. Pupil consultation has been used to inform the creation of the school's RSHE curriculum and this policy where appropriate.

2. Policy availability

2.1 Stakeholders can be informed about the policy through the website. Should a hard copy of the document be required, the Federation will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs, ensuring equitable accessibility for all. The policy can be obtained in an alternative format by contacting one of our school offices.

3. Policy values, aims and objectives

3.1 Taking inspiration from John 10:10, our vision is to support our pupils in 'living life to the full' by opening them up to a world of opportunities and nurturing a love of learning so that they will be inspired to fulfil their true potentials, both now and in the future.

3.2 Our curriculum is underpinned by key values and big ideas which interweave our teaching, learning and collective worship. As with all curriculum areas, the key values and big ideas also permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of RSHE lessons.

3.3 RSHE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. RSHE equips children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, to celebrate their sexuality and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing both now and in the future. We recognise the importance of RSHE in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The overarching objective of RSHE is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development via the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law and provisions of the Equality Act, 2010.

3.4 Effective RSHE can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by pupils to establish and maintain relationships. RSHE will ensure children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

3.5 RSHE will be approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving pupil health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes. The following principles are based on research evidence, supported by a wide range of leading organisations including the NSPCC, Barnardo's, The Children's Society and education unions.

4. Principles of effective RHSE

4.1 RSHE provision at Tas Valley Federation:

- Is an identifiable part of our school curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the Key Stages.
- Is taught by staff regularly trained in RSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme, where appropriate).
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and how they can contribute at home.
- Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, sexual harassment, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- Gives a positive view of human sexuality with honest and medically accurate information so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
- Gives pupils opportunities to reflect on their values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex and nurture respect for different views.
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the School Health Service and other health and advice services including reliable information online.
- Fosters equality, including LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in RSHE lessons and in everyday school life.
- Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Seeks pupils' views about RSHE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

5. Entitlement and equality of opportunity

5.1 All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner. Teachers will include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child will be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self–esteem.

5.2 We actively celebrate the diversity of our pupils, their families and the wider whole-school community. RSHE will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law to ensure all pupils have equal access to our RSHE curriculum. We do not use RSHE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another.

5.3 Thorough consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances (including gender identity,

faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community) in accordance with the school's inclusion policy.

6. Teaching and learning

6.1 All members of teaching and support staff are involved in the delivery of the RSHE programme. All staff involved in the delivery of RSHE will receive training to ensure that pupils receive clear and consistent approaches to RSHE throughout their time at Tas Valley federation. Whole staff training needs will be is prioritised by Senior Leaders and individual needs are identified through staff appraisal.

6.2 On occasion, external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSHE to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, we will:

- Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and our published policy.
- Discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- Ask to see in advance the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan so that collectively we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs).
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with our school's policy.
- Arrange for a member of staff to supervise/support the visitor.
- Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning.

6.3 RSHE will be taught through a range of teaching methodologies, including storytelling, drama, discussions, individual private reflection, quizzes and fact finding, value spectrums, debating, independent research and artistic presentations etc. This wide range of teaching strategies promotes engagement by all pupils, irrespective of preferred learning styles.

7. Curriculum

7.1 The majority of elements of the RSHE curriculum are a statutory requirement to teach to meet the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2026) and The Equalities Act, 2010.

7.2 RSHE will be taught through a 'spiral curriculum'. This approach means that pupils will gain knowledge, develop values and acquire skills gradually by re-visiting core themes to build on prior learning. RSHE will support the school's commitment to safeguard pupils through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

7.3 Our intended RSHE curriculum is detailed below but may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our pupils are living and learning. If this is the case, parent/carers will be provided with appropriate notice before the amended programme is delivered. Where possible the curriculum will be complemented by themed assemblies, topic days and cross curricular links.

Primary

Relationships Education	*Families and people who care for me* *Caring friendships* *Respectful kind relationships* *Online safety and awareness* *Being safe*
Sex Education	*How a baby is conceived and born*
Health Education	*General wellbeing* *Wellbeing online* *Physical health and fitness* *Healthy eating* *Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping* *Health protection and prevention* *Personal safety* *Basic first aid* *Developing bodies*

8. Assessment

8.1 Pupils' learning will be assessed at the end of every topic to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning, and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment activities will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that pupils do not feel under pressure and will include self-assessment tasks that will confirm pupils understanding of the topics. The evaluation of teaching and learning assessments will be shared with pupils and parents as appropriate.

8.2 The quality of RSHE teaching and learning will be monitored through a range of strategies. These could include RSHE learning walks, team teaching and informal drop-ins conducted by subject leads and/or members of the senior leadership team. The observations and findings of which will be used to identify and inform future staff training needs.

9. Responding to pupils' questions

9.1 There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within RSHE. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture. We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of the Federation rules and class charter. Pupils will regularly be provided with opportunities to ask questions in an open setting and to raise anonymous questions e.g. an 'ask-it-basket'. Teachers will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate, based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by pupils during the lesson. Teachers may delay answering a pupil's question if they need time to consult with a colleague or the school leadership team to construct an appropriate answer.

9.2 Teachers can refuse to answer a question that they feel is inappropriate and will never answer personal questions about their own body, personal circumstances or lifestyle choices. If a teacher does not answer a question, the pupil will have the reasons clearly explained and the teacher will work with the pupil to identify suitable sources of information where they can obtain an answer to their question. This may include encouraging the pupil to ask a parent/carer or trusted adult at home.

10. Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

10.1 The Federation's responsibility to safeguard pupils through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to our curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

10.2 At the beginning of RSHE teaching, the class will discuss and create a 'working agreement'. Confidentiality will be included within this agreement so pupils are clear of the limits of confidentiality that can be guaranteed by a teacher.

10.3 Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within RSHE avoids pupils feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels comfortable. This strategy makes RSHE more accessible to all pupils including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

10.4 Teachers will signpost pupils to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Teachers will also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise on topic coverage, using trusted, high quality local resources, so that the school can be responsive to pupil's pastoral needs and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required.

10.5 Teachers will understand that an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.

10.6 In line with the document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), all staff are aware of what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse, including referring to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity. Staff are also aware of need to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those that need to be involved in line with the Safeguarding Policy (such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and children's social care). A member of staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this is not in the best interests of the child.

11. Involving parents and carers

12. We believe that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children in RSHE and that RSHE is most effective when it is collaboration between school and home. Therefore, we wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people within our Federation through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

11.2 The Federation will provide support to parents and carers through an annual workshop which provides a valuable opportunity to develop awareness of emerging RSHE topics, meet staff and review the resources being used as well as consider ways to build on the learning at home, fostering strong channels of communication between parents/carers and their children. The Federation also operates an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss RSHE at relevant times throughout the school year.

11.3 The vast majority of RSHE is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers can request that their child is excused from Sex Education. If a parent wishes their child to be excused from some or all the non-statutory Sex Education, they should discuss this with the Executive Headteacher or Head of School, making clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. Senior Leaders will outline to parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on

the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents/carers propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once a decision has been made, parents/carers must inform the school in writing stating their reasons as to why they would like their child withdrawn.

11.4 Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, our Federation will respect a parent/carers' request to have their child excused from non-statutory Sex Education.

11.5 The school will document this process.

11.6 This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where senior leaders may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

11.7 If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

12. Links to other school policies and curriculum

12.1 This policy complements the following policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Computing and E-safety Policy (including Acceptable Use Policy)
- Disability Equality Policy
- Drug Education Policy
- Gender Equality Policy
- Single Equality Policy
- SEND Information Report
- PSHE Policy
- Racial Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

13. Review date

13.1 The governing body monitors the impact of RSHE on a regular basis. The governors give serious consideration to any comments, consultation and evidence of impact.

13.2 Consultation with pupils will be conducted on a regular basis to support with reviewing the curriculum to ensure it remains responsive to emerging needs and the policy updated accordingly.

13.3 This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or sooner if the RSHE curriculum is amended, for example in response to emerging themes, changing pupil needs or introduction of new legislation and guidance.