



## The Priory School, Hitchin

Excellence in education, for every young person, every day

| Name of policy                                                                                                                                                           | RSHE (Self & Society) policy |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Statutory                                                                                                                                                                | Yes                          |
| Date policy was up-dated                                                                                                                                                 | February 2026                |
| Date of next review                                                                                                                                                      | February 2027                |
| Governors committee                                                                                                                                                      | Full Governing Body          |
| Member of staff responsible for the policy                                                                                                                               | Matt Blayney                 |
| Approved by Headteacher for operational implementation on 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2026<br>Pending formal Governing Body ratification on 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2026. |                              |

Responsibility   **Respect**   Resilience

# RSHE policy (Self & Society)

## Rationale

This policy is based on research, and is in-line with National Guidelines on Sex and Relationship Education and Health Education. It has been informed by reference to the PSHE Association, '*Guidance for schools on writing a PSHE education policy*', It takes the view that a balanced, and that an informed approach is the most effective.

The school defines Sex and Relationships Education as learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. The school defines Health Education as understanding how bodies change, the relationship between good physical and mental health, and students knowing how to make well informed, positive choices for themselves.

RSHE education gives students the knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe, and to prepare them for life and work in modern Britain. It is a key part of a school curriculum that allows students to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to manage their lives now, and in the future.

RSHE education helps students to achieve their academic potential, and to leave school equipped with skills they will need throughout later life. RSHE education helps pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society. From making responsible decisions about alcohol to succeeding in their first job, RSHE education helps pupils to manage many of the most critical opportunities, challenges and responsibilities they will face while growing up.

RSHE education at TPSH is a planned element of the whole curriculum that helps to give children the knowledge, skills, and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens in a rapidly changing world. A student's personal and social development should be the sum total of all the experiences, planned and unplanned, received by a young person in the course of their time in school that promotes their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development, and thus the well-being of both the individual and ultimately the wider community. In undertaking RSHE education, children learn to recognise their own worth, work well with others, and become increasingly responsible for their own learning. RSHE provision at TPSH is primarily delivered through our 'Self and Society' subject.

The National Curriculum framework for RSHE education categorises the areas covered by RSHE as follows;

- Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of every child's abilities
- Preparing to play an active role as citizens
- Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle
- Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people
- Equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills and attributes to make the most of changing opportunities in learning and work

The DfE statutory framework for Relationships and Sex education now forms an integral part of the wider RSHE education programme. This policy covers TPSH's approach to delivering RSHE education as an integral part of our school curriculum.

## Policy Availability

Parents and carers can access this policy in the 'Policies' section of the school website. Reference will be made to its availability in correspondence to parents/carers in any RSHE-related correspondence advertising learning events within the RSHE education programme.

## Policy Aims and Objectives

Our school's vision is '*Excellence in education, for every young person, every day*'. To achieve this vision, our curriculum needs to be so powerful that it provides children with the academic and cultural capital that

enables them to compete favourably and at the highest level with students from selective or independent schools. This mission extends to RSHE education provision: we want our students to develop the knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe, and to prepare them for life and work in modern Britain.

RSHE has a fundamental role to play in enabling schools to meet Section 351 of the Education Act 1996 and the aims of the National Curriculum. Section 351 of the Education Act 1996 requires that all maintained schools provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children at the school and of society, and that prepares children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

TPSH is guided therefore by the stated requirements of the National Curriculum:

- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.
- To prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

In particular, the RSHE education programme at TPHS should:

- Work to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for RSHE, RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) and RPE (Religion, Philosophy and Ethics).
- Ensure that children are developing confidence and responsibility, making the most of their abilities, preparing to play an active role as citizens, developing healthy, safer lifestyles, developing good relationships and respecting differences between people.
- Meet the 2018 statutory requirements in relation to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as published by the Department for Education under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002, and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

## **RSHE Roles and Responsibilities**

Key roles in relation to RSHE delivery at TPHS are:

- LGB Inclusion, Curriculum, and Wellbeing committee – oversight and ratification of RSHE Policy
- Link Governor – liaison between LGB and PSHE leadership team
- SLT link for RHSE – Headteacher
- RSHE Co-ordinator (Carly Watkins) – management of taught programme and external inputs
- KS5 Lead – (Rachael Buchanan) - management of taught programme and external inputs
- Year Tutor Teams – responsible for specified inputs during registration time/timetable collapses
- 'Self and Society' Teaching Team – responsible for delivery of the taught RSHE programme
- Learning Support Team – responsible for ensuring that programme is accessible and meaningful to all students
- Sixth Form Tutor Team – responsible for delivery of the taught RSHE programme at Key Stage 5.

## **Creating a safe and supportive learning environment**

Pupils' personal, social, and emotional development can be encouraged by a supportive school ethos, where all students are valued and encouraged, where positive relationships are seen as important and there is a safe and secure school environment which is conducive to learning.

TPSH has the aim to provide a secure and caring community which encourages a sense of achievement, respect, and responsibility for all, to support students' personal, social, and emotional development. The RSHE programme therefore does not operate in isolation. RSHE is supported in the whole school environment via;

- Our shared values of Responsibility, Respect, and Resilience.
- The Bullying Ladder of Consequences – posters are displayed around the school, and these are referred to and upheld by all members of staff.
- Staff supporting student wellbeing e.g. Wellbeing team, Attendance office, pastoral staff
- Mentoring – done by staff and students to discuss issues and promote a community

- Noticeboards – give information regarding the importance of RSHE and advice on a variety of issues
- Assemblies – many of which are related to themes developed in the RSHE education programme
- Open evenings – an opportunity to show prospective parents how RSHE is delivered in school as part of our Self and Society lessons.

We aim to create a safe and supportive learning environment in all RSHE lessons, timetable collapses, tutor inputs and inputs from external providers. The latter are always supervised by an appropriate member of staff to ensure that external providers meet this aim.

This policy is informed by the school's Safeguarding Policy, which specifies a clear course of action where students indicate in some way that they are vulnerable or 'at risk.' Staff safeguarding training is always applicable in RSHE learning activities, where disclosure during or after inputs might be more likely. External providers are briefed to report any student disclosures to an appropriate member of TPSH staff.

## **Entitlement and Equality of Opportunity**

This section is informed by the School's Equality and Diversity Policy. One of the school's Diversity Leads is also a teacher of Self and Society.

All students are entitled to benefit from learning associated with the RSHE education programme. Teaching will consider the age, ability, readiness, and cultural backgrounds of all students, and should start from and build upon the students' current knowledge, understanding, skills, language, experience, concerns, and interests.

The use of a 'spiral curriculum' for core themes allows all students to re-visit topics at an age-appropriate level. The RSHE education programme is informed throughout by the need to promote diversity and inclusion, reflecting the varied cultural backgrounds of students and the need to achieve equality of opportunity. It is recognised that parents/carers retain the right to withdraw their children from specified elements of the statutory RSE programme – see RSE Policy.

Parents have access to the RSHE programme via the school website, and we will write to parents where inputs might prove to be sensitive. Where parents request withdrawal, we will in the first instance always seek to explain to parents the value of their child's participation. Where parents still withdraw their child/children, they will be requested to provide replacement inputs of content. Alternative provision will be made in school for students withdrawn from RSHE education activities at their parents' request.

We recognise the right for all students to enjoy access to RSHE education learning that meets individual learning needs. We ensure that SEND students receive access to the RSHE programme by appropriate adaptive practice and the use of learning support assistants to support learning where applicable. Students will not be withdrawn from lessons or other RSHE education activities to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Teaching and learning within the RSHE education programme is informed by the following principles:

- Wherever possible, contexts for learning should be relevant to the children and make use of actual situations and current issues.
- There should be a high degree of active participation by children, and active learning techniques should be extensively used.
- Appropriate use should be made of drama, role-play and simulation.
- Learning methods should develop the skills of enquiry, research, discussion, debate and philosophical thinking.
- Organisation and management in the classroom should offer children opportunities for working individually and collaboratively in pairs and groups.
- Effective differentiation in resources and activities should be developed to make learning accessible to all students
- Resources should reflect our diverse society

# The RSHE Curriculum

## Intent

The RSHE education programme is planned to allow all students to achieve the following broad learning outcomes:

- To equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attributes to play an active role as informed citizens within and beyond school
- To provide opportunities for students to consider and to clarify their own views
- To develop good relationships with others and to respect and celebrate the differences between people.
- To develop a healthy, safe lifestyle
- To equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attributes to make informed progression decisions, and to make the most of changing opportunities in learning and work now and in their future lives

## Implementation

The most recent RSHE review (published 2025) maintained the previous RSHE status as a non-statutory subject that does not have to be taught as a timetabled and discreet lesson.

In the Department for Education (DfE) 2025 publication on RSHE it is clear that the content must be tailored to the needs of the local area. DfE guidance of statutory RSE education (2019) has made the RSE component of RSHE education statutory, but delivery models remain at the discretion of schools.

In addition, the RSHE education programme at TPSH will be informed by emerging and evolving issues in our local area. Currently key foci are healthy relationships education, safe use of the internet and social media; consent and harmful sexual behaviours to Key Stage 5.

Continuity will be fostered through the use of exercise books in all Self and Society lessons.

We will aim to ensure that students make connections between their learning and 'real life' behaviours by wherever possible linking learning to contemporary and topical examples. Inputs from external providers can be particularly powerful here and will be provided where resources allow. Students will be provided with opportunities to reflect critically on their learning in RSHE education.

Critical reflection will be at the core of formal and informal assessment undertaken within the programme. Teaching and learning activities, and associated resources, will always be planned to provide students with clear and up-to-date information on what they need to know to stay safe and healthy, and to protect and enforce their human rights. Information given should always be clear and impartial e.g., in relation to topics such as abortion and female genital mutilation. Information sent to parents will be guided by the same principle e.g., using National Online Safety briefings to inform parents on e-safety issues.

## Planning

The TPSH RSHE education programme is informed by the PSHE Association's Programme of Study, the DfE statutory guidance for RSE, and local requirements. The PSHE Association Programme is an outline of key concepts and skills.

Flexibility exists within the programme to enable us to respond quickly to emerging issues within the school, for example by additional assembly inputs, tutor-led inputs, or external inputs. The latter can be arranged at short notice as availability is advertised.

## Timetabling

Students in Years 7 to 9 will have two Self and Society lessons per fortnight on their timetable. Year 10 and 11 students will have one Self and Society lesson on their timetable per fortnight.

Self and Society is taught by staff who have expressed an interest in teaching this subject or those of known strength in certain subject areas, ensuring that students have a positive and meaningful learning experience with regard to their RSHE.

In addition to discreet lessons, students learning is further enhanced through planned inputs in registration time, timetable collapses to facilitate more extended inputs by tutors or external providers, and assemblies.

Opportunities also exist in the curriculum for promoting students' personal, social and emotional development. These are carefully mapped against statutory and other guidelines, and are summarised briefly below:

- **English and Drama:** *emotional literacy; discussion and debate; enquiry and communication; stories that illustrate aspects of personal and social development; how the media present information.*
- **Mathematics:** *aspects of financial capability; counting and sharing; data handling.*
- **Science:** *drugs (including medicines); sex education; health; safety and the environment; ethical issues.*
- **Design and Technology:** *health and safety; healthy eating; realising that people have needs as they generate design ideas; use of technology; sustainable development.*
- **Computing:** *e-safety; safe use of social media; finding information on the internet, and checking its relevance.*
- **Art and Design:** *reflecting on and responding to ideas and experiences communicated through works of art, craft and design from various times and cultures.*
- **Music:** *making the most of abilities in playing or singing; appreciating and responding to music arising from diverse cultures.*
- **PE:** *teaching and learning about health and safety; development of personal and social skills through team and individual activities, games, and sports; gender issues; keeping fit and healthy.*
- **History:** *discussion and debate; enquiry and communication; an understanding of the role and importance of institutions such as parliament and key rights such as voting.*

RSHE education is also promoted and supported through a range of opportunities outside the classroom such as:

- Student Voice Forums and Student Leadership opportunities.
- School-wide reading programme which includes RSHE themes.
- School-wide weekly TPSH debate in Form Time.
- Weekly Form time dedicated to Self and Society.
- Visits to the school counsellors.
- Activities Week.
- Assemblies and reflection activities.
- Peer mentoring.
- Sports clubs, teams, and activities.
- Debate Club.
- Enrichment Days.
- Trips and visits, both day trips and residential trips.

At the beginning of every academic year, the RSHE Co-ordinator will write to parents providing them with an overview and information of our Self and Society offering at TPSH.

## Assessment

The PSHE Association notes that assessment in RSHE Education is not about 'passing or failing', or about behavioural outcomes. Teachers and students need to be aware of what has been learned, and how learning and understanding have progressed. Assessment of progress is therefore set against learning objectives and outcomes for each topic.

Progress checks will be conducted for all students, which provides school leaders and parents with feedback regarding pupil progress in Self and Society.

## Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues, such as sex, drugs, racism, gender, religion and politics, will arise within the RSHE education curriculum. The exploration of these issues can touch deeply held beliefs and values and can arouse strong feelings.

Part of the purpose of RSHE education at TPSH is to enable our students to address sensitive and controversial issues directly in a balanced way and in a safe learning environment.

Government statutory guidance on Relationships and Sex Education states: "Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs ... Teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support."

This guidance is reflected in RSHE resources, where appropriate. Teachers also need to be aware of and to follow protocols and procedures outlined in safeguarding procedures, and school policies on e-safety, drug education, relationships and sex education, behaviour, etc.

The following suggestions for dealing with sensitive and controversial issues are taken from the document entitled 'Passport: a framework for personal and social development' (published by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation):

Teachers should:

- ensure pupils establish ground rules about how they will behave towards each other and how the issue will be dealt with. Teachers should use the centrally provided ground rules resources for each lesson.
- judge when to allow pupils to discuss issues on their own or in small groups and when to join in and offer support.
- ensure that pupils are clear about the difference between fact, opinion and belief, and that they have access to balanced information and views against which they can then clarify their own opinions and views, including contributions made by visitors to the classroom.
- decide how far they (the teachers) are prepared to express their own views, bearing in mind that they are in an influential position and that they have to work within the school's values framework.
- provide appropriate support after a session for any pupil who may be troubled by an issue raised.

## Responding to Students' Questions

Teachers should decide how far they (as teachers) are prepared to express their own views, bearing in mind that they are in an influential position and that they have to work within the school's values framework. Usually this will take the form of presenting alternative perspectives on any given topic.

It is recommended that at all times, teachers should follow the guidance set out in DfE guidance regarding political impartiality: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/political-impartiality-in-schools/political-impartiality-in-schools>.

## **RSE Rights to Removal**

Legislation states that parents have the right to withdraw their children from aspects of RSE that do not form part of the science national curriculum. Parents have access to the RSHE programme via the school website.

Where parents request removal we will in the first instance always seek to explain to parents the value of their child's participation. Where parents still withdraw their child/children, they will be requested in writing to provide replacement inputs of content. Alternative provision will be made in school for students removed from PSHE education activities at their parents' request. However, the new statutory RSE guidance states that, from up to three terms before their 16th birthday, students can request access to any learning resources that were missed as a result of parental removal. Where such a request is received, it is the school's intention to provide access to these materials.

## **Confidentiality**

In the context of RSHE education, students sometimes make personal disclosures. Teachers and supervisors should be fully aware of the school's safeguarding procedures.

For example, students must be made aware that it is necessary for the school to act upon certain disclosures that they may make, for instance in relation to activities that are illegal or harmful to themselves or others.

No teacher can promise confidentiality to a student and this should be made clear to the students from the outset. Students should discuss their concerns with their parents first. Ground rules on this should be made clear in Sex Education lessons.

## **External Providers**

External providers are a valuable resource. They can bring new and informed knowledge, expertise and experiences to the classroom, and add diversity to the delivery model. They can also offer real scenarios that allow students to engage with values, clarification and problem solving.

Visitors can also help to establish positive relationships between agencies and young people and assist children in accessing these agencies.

External providers are used where appropriate to bring expertise and a range of delivery approaches into the RSHE education curriculum.

Learning objectives and outcomes are agreed in advance with any external providers. External providers can undertake their own measures of progress, but we will always request that results are made available to TPSH.

For any external inputs, we will ensure that teachers will always be present to ensure that learning is appropriate and safe. The RSHE Co-ordinator will undertake close liaison before inputs by external providers to ensure that they are fully briefed on course and safeguarding expectations, and to meet their logistical requirements. The RSHE Co-ordinator will undertake an evaluation with external providers after their input to inform future planning.