



# Relationships Health and Sex Education Policy

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| <b>Policy Code:</b>        |                |
| <b>Policy Start Date:</b>  | September 2026 |
| <b>Policy Review Date:</b> | September 2027 |

## **Overview**

This policy is Trust-wide.

**Part 1** provides the principles behind the RHSE Curriculum in all our schools and provides key statutory guidance for all staff.

**Part 2** will be contextualised by schools to show how these principles will be applied in each unique CIT setting.

## **Part 1**

### **CIT Statutory Guidance for Relationships, Health, Sex Education**

CIT Multi-Academy Trust is committed to delivering high-quality, inclusive Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) across all our academies and designations.

This policy ensures compliance with the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in July 2025 and reflects our safeguarding responsibilities, values of equality, and commitment to pupil wellbeing.

## **1. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All academies within the Trust
- All staff, including teachers, support staff, agency staff, volunteers and any person who delivers any aspect of RHSE curriculum.
- All pupils on our school rolls
- Governors, trustees, and relevant external providers

The policy should be applied consistently across the Trust, and school leaders will be expected to detail their own individual school context at the end of this policy in Part 2.

## **2. Legal Framework**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make relationships education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

This policy is informed by, and complies with, the following key legislation and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2026)
- Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 2002 (Section 80A)

- Education Act 1996 (Section 403)
- Academy Trust Handbook 2025 [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92321/ATHB2025.pdf)

#### **4. Equality**

All CIT Schools will comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149), when teaching RSHE.

Schools must ensure topics in RSHE are taught in a way which does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment.

Pupils will be supported by school staff and curriculum content to understand the importance of equality and respect and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics in an age and stage appropriate format.

#### **4. Aims and Principles of RSHE**

RSHE within any setting within CIT aims to:

RHSE supports pupils to:

- Develop healthy, respectful relationships
- Understand physical and mental wellbeing
- Stay safe (including online)
- Prepare for adult life in modern Britain

The Trust recognises RHSE as central to safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare through:

- Equipping pupils with knowledge to make informed decisions about relationships, health, and wellbeing – relevant to age, stage, cognition. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development.
- Promoting respect, kindness, and equality. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness.
- Supporting safeguarding through age-appropriate education on consent, abuse, and online safety
- Reflecting the diverse backgrounds and identities of our pupils and contexts.

RHSE across the Trust will be:

- Age-appropriate and developmentally sequenced
- Inclusive and accessible to all pupils, including SEND
- Evidence-informed and regularly reviewed
- Delivered sensitively and responsibly
- Rooted in safeguarding and child protection
- Transparent to parents and carers

The Trust requires all teaching of RHSE in all schools to be:

- Compliant with the Equality Act 2010
- Reflecting diversity without promoting any particular lifestyle
- Supporting of students with SEND through adapted delivery
- Sensitive to religious and cultural backgrounds
- Applying a balanced and factual approach

## **5. Curriculum Design**

The Trust expects that every school will develop a curriculum that:

- Meets the statutory content for RSHE (DfE 2026 guidance) and is compliant with all aspects for the designation of the school.
- Is age-appropriate and developmentally suitable for the context and designation of the individual school
- Includes statutory content for the designation of the school i.e. mainstream primary, specialist or secondary (to be set out in Part 2 of this document).
- Is inclusive of all pupils including those with protected characteristics.

Each CIT school has the autonomy to set their own compliant and setting/context specific curriculum which is carefully constructed and sequenced around the needs of their own pupils.

The Directors of Education will ensure that curriculum construction and content is effective and compliant.

School leaders will ensure that effective, high-quality teaching will break down core knowledge and skills into manageable and well-sequenced units, including opportunities for pupils to practise skills so that they will be confident to use them in real-life situations.

The curriculum for all school designations will build knowledge and skills sequentially, and ensure regular feedback provided on pupil progress.

There will be a range of opinions regarding some topics within RSE. The starting principle should be that applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear about their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

All school curriculum sequences must enable CIT pupils to understand the importance of equality and respect throughout their education. They should learn about all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment, by the end of their secondary education.

## **6. Safeguarding**

At CIT we believe that the teaching of RHSE is a key safeguarding tool and is a key part of our safeguarding strategy. The impact of RHSE provision is checked as part of the Safeguarding school reviews.

Pupils will be taught how to identify and report abuse. Relationships education will focus on how to form and sustain positive relationships but will also help children identify risks and harms. Relationships education may therefore include topics related to preventing sexual abuse, for example, or avoiding sharing inappropriate material online. This will be done without describing the detail of any sexual activity involved.

Staff will follow Trust safeguarding procedures if disclosures arise during RSHE lessons.

Leaders will ensure that the RHSE curriculum:

- Is embedded within each school's safeguarding framework
- Enables pupils at an age and stage appropriate level to recognise abuse, coercion, and exploitation
- Provides clear reporting routes for when concerns arise
- Is delivered by trained staff who understand both school and Trust safeguarding policy and protocols

All disclosures made during RHSE lessons will be managed in line with:

- The school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- KCSIE statutory guidance

## **7. Delivery of RHSE**

### **Responsibility**

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring compliance of curriculum and delivery of any RHSE content in their school.

Trust Education leads and safeguarding central team will provide oversight and challenge to support compliance.

### **Teaching Staff**

In all CIT schools RHSE will be delivered by:

- Trained teachers and/or specialists who understand the guidance and curriculum they are delivering
- Staff who are considered by school leaders to be confident and competent in handling sensitive topics

Pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond any sex education covered by the school or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. School leaders will set out in Part 2 of this document how they expect teachers to handle such questions, with an emphasis on supporting the child – including detail of the support and training in handling questions that are better not dealt with in the classroom.

#### Use of External Providers

Schools may need to use the services of external providers or organisations who come in to speak to or work with adults or pupils about content related to RHSE curriculum provision. It is the Trust expectation that school leaders ensure they are:

- Carefully vetted and quality assured
- Aligned with Trust policy and safeguarding standards (including the Visiting Speakers Policy)
- Not used to replace teacher responsibility

### **8. Parental/carers Engagement**

The Trust is committed to transparency and partnership with parents.

All CIT schools will ensure they take steps to pro-actively engage parents and carers make sure they are aware of what is being taught in RSHE. These steps might include inviting parents into school to discuss the curriculum content and the importance of RSHE for wellbeing and safety, inviting them to discuss any concerns, and supporting parents in managing conversations with their children about RSHE topics.

Schools will consult parents and carers when developing and reviewing their RSE policy and RSHE curriculum content.

The overview of the RHSE curriculum topics and when they are being taught will be available on all school websites.

Teaching materials that give further detail of content covered in these lessons will be available on request.

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RHSE.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their pupils from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction. It is an expectation in all Trust schools that Headteachers ensure this is the case.

Before granting any request for withdrawal of a child from sex education, The Trust will require that the school's Headteacher will discuss the request with parents, (and the child if appropriate), to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Schools will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

- Where **primary schools** provide sex education, Headteachers must automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from it, other than content that is taught as part of the science curriculum.
- In **secondary** schools, the Headteacher can refuse a request in exceptional circumstances, for example because of safeguarding concerns or a pupil's specific vulnerability.

From three terms before the pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back into sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal.

For example, if a pupil turns 16 during the autumn term, the pupil can opt back into sex education at any time after the start of the previous autumn term. All relevant CIT schools will ensure that pupils know they have this option.

If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, it is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate education during the period of withdrawal.

## **9. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities**

Teaching should be developed to ensure these subjects are accessible for pupils with SEND and prepare pupils for adulthood, as set out in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

This applies to both mainstream primary, secondary and specialist schools. Schools should be aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues.

RSHE can be particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.

How schools will ensure RSHE content is accessible to SEND pupils will be set out in Part 2 of this policy document.

## **10 . Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Trust will conduct audits of RSHE provision through the School Review and Safeguarding Review processes.

Governors and trustees will receive updates on RSHE implementation as part of Safeguarding Governor feedback to the LSB.

Leaders will detail in Part 2 of this policy document how the school will monitor the quality and impact of RHSE curriculum and teaching. How this information will be gathered, analysed and used to improve the knowledge and understanding of pupils in the setting.

## **11. Staff Training**

The Trust expects that all CIT schools will ensure schools train and prepare staff for delivering RHSE content.

Part 2 of this document will set out how school leaders will ensure that all staff delivering RHSE will receive:

- Regular safeguarding updates
- RHSE-specific CPD
- Guidance on handling disclosures and sensitive issue

## **10. Roles and Responsibilities**

**Trust Board:** The Board are responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the policy. The board will take assurances from the roles below to ensure they know that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes
- Teaching is accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Curriculum content and teaching materials are aligned with this statutory guidance 34
- Clear information is provided for parents on the subject content, teaching materials and external providers, and on the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education.

**Executive Leadership:** The ELT will approve Part 1 of this policy. They have responsibility for strategic direction and compliance towards Trust expectations. The Director of Safeguarding will keep this policy reviewed and up to date.

Directors of Education and the Safeguarding central team will use monitoring activities to check compliance to this policy (Parts 1 and 2).

**Local School Boards:** Monitoring implementation at school level and reporting impact and compliance to the Trust.

**Headteachers:** Are responsible for their school RHSE offer, policy training and delivery. They will need to contextualise this policy (Part 2) to ensure compliance with the RHSE Statutory Guidance 2026. They are responsible for the compliant delivery of the appropriate RHSE curriculum content.

**RSHE Leads:** Curriculum planning and quality assurance of the delivery. Ensure teachers are assessing performance and use this information to understand whether pupils are accessing and understanding the content and teachers are able to plan the appropriate next steps.

## **12. Complaints**

Concerns regarding RHSE should be raised through:

- School complaints procedures
- Escalation to Trust if required as set out in the Trust Complaints Policy
  
- All complaints will be handled:
- Promptly
- Respectfully
- In line with statutory responsibilities

## **13. Review and Publication**

Approved by: ELT

Date of approval:

Effective from: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Policy owner: Director of Safeguarding

This policy will:

Be reviewed annually by the Director of Safeguarding and ELT

Part 1 of this guidance will be made available to parents through school websites.

Part 2 of this guidance will be available to parents on request.