

Parent Guide: Relationships, Sex & Health Education (RSHE)

Years 7–11 | Information for Parents & Carers

This guide explains **what your child will learn** through Relationships, Sex & Health Education (RSHE) at secondary school, **why it is taught**, and **how schools ensure it is age-appropriate, safe and balanced**.

What is RSHE?

RSHE stands for **Relationships, Sex & Health Education**. It is a **statutory part of the school curriculum** for all secondary-aged pupils in England.

The aim of RSHE is to help young people:

- Build **healthy, respectful relationships**
- Understand **consent, boundaries and the law**
- Stay **safe online and offline**
- Look after their **physical and mental health**
- Be prepared for **adult life and future relationships**

RSHE is **not about encouraging sexual activity**. It focuses on **safety, wellbeing, respect and informed decision-making**.

How RSHE is Taught

Schools using the Cre8tive Resources RSHE Curriculum deliver lessons that are:

- **Age-appropriate and carefully sequenced**
- Taught in a **safe and respectful classroom environment**
- Based on **facts, the law and medical accuracy**
- Sensitive to pupils' backgrounds, beliefs and needs

Lessons build gradually from **Year 7 to Year 11**, revisiting topics as pupils mature and deepening understanding over time.

What Pupils Learn (Overview)

Relationships & Respect

- Friendships, kindness and empathy
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Consent, boundaries and communication

- Respect for others and equality

Online Safety

- Social media and digital behaviour
- Online grooming, exploitation and harassment
- Pornography, AI, deepfakes and misinformation
- Managing online pressure and reputation

Sex & Sexual Health (Secondary-only)

- The law around consent and sexual activity
- Contraception and sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Pregnancy choices and sexual health services
- Recognising abuse and knowing where to seek help

Health & Wellbeing

- Mental health, stress and coping strategies
- Puberty and body changes
- Self-harm and suicide awareness (taught sensitively)
- Healthy lifestyles and risk-reduction

Sensitive Topics

Some topics may feel challenging, but they are **statutory and safeguarding-led**, including:

- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Domestic abuse and coercive control
- Online pornography and exploitation
- Forced marriage, FGM, virginity testing and hymenoplasty

These are taught **carefully and age-appropriately**, with a focus on:

- Keeping young people safe
- Understanding the law
- Knowing how to seek help and support

Parental Rights & Transparency

- Parents **cannot withdraw** pupils from Relationships or Health Education
- Parents **can request withdrawal** from some or all *sex education* elements
- Schools are encouraged to be **open and transparent** about RSHE materials

Schools should be happy to:

- Explain what is taught and when

- Share curriculum overviews
- Discuss concerns or questions

Our Approach

Cre8tive Resources' RSHE curriculum:

- Follows the **DfE Statutory RSHE Guidance (July 2025)**
- Is reviewed and updated regularly
- Supports schools in meeting safeguarding and inspection expectations
- Places **student wellbeing and safety first**

If you have questions about RSHE delivery at your child's school, we recommend contacting the school directly.

This guide is intended for parents and carers and supports schools in meeting statutory RSHE transparency expectations.

DfE RSHE 2025 – Compliance Snapshot

This one-page snapshot outlines how The Corsham School **RSHE Curriculum** meets the **DfE Statutory Relationships, Sex & Health Education Guidance (July 2025)** and supports schools in being **inspection-ready for September 2026**.

Statutory Status

- RSHE is **mandatory** for all secondary pupils
- Schools **must have regard** to DfE statutory guidance
- RSHE is part of the **basic curriculum** and inspected through Ofsted Personal Development

Curriculum Design & Sequencing

- ✓ Five-strand **spiral curriculum model** (Years 7–11)
- ✓ Age-appropriate sequencing of sensitive topics
- ✓ Preventative approach – pupils are taught *before* risks arise
- ✓ Clear progression in knowledge, skills and understanding

Spiral strands:

1. Equality, Diversity & British Values
2. Personal Safety & Digital Awareness
3. Relationships & Sex Education
4. Modern Dangers: Online & Offline
5. Healthy Bodies & Emotional Wellbeing

Statutory Content Coverage (DfE 2025)

The curriculum explicitly covers all required secondary RSHE areas, including:

- Respectful and healthy relationships
- Sexual consent and the law
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Online safety, pornography, AI and deepfakes
- Domestic abuse and coercive control
- Exploitation and grooming
- Forced marriage, FGM, virginity testing & hymenoplasty
- Contraception, STIs, pregnancy choices
- Mental health, self-harm and suicide awareness

Safeguarding & Legal Compliance

- Safeguarding-led curriculum design
- Accurate teaching of UK law (consent, exploitation, image sharing)
- Clear signposting to help and support
- Language avoids victim-blaming and normalisation of harm

Aligned with:

- KCSIE
- Prevent Duty
- Equality Act 2010
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Assessment, Monitoring & Evidence

Schools receive: ✓ Lesson-level statutory mapping ✓ Whole-curriculum audit documents ✓
End-of-unit assessments and confidence checkers ✓ Clear evidence for Ofsted Personal Development

Parental Engagement

- Supports RSHE policy requirements
- Designed for transparency with parents
- Clear distinction between relationships, health and sex education
- Materials available for parental review

Inspection Confidence

This curriculum enables The Corsham School to demonstrate:

- Clear **curriculum intent**
- Strong **implementation**
- Measurable **impact on pupil knowledge, safety and wellbeing**

This snapshot supports Sevidencing statutory RSHE compliance under the DfE Guidance (July 2025).

RSHE EDUCATION FRAMEWORK & DESIGN

PSHE education follows closely the framework provided by the PSHE Association (www.pshe-association.org.uk). This national programme of study covers Key Stages 3 to 4 and is based on three core themes:

1. Health and Wellbeing
2. Relationships
3. Living in the Wider World

However the RSHE curriculum is primarily based upon the latest RSHE statutory reforms from the DfE that are to be implemented by every school by September 2026.

Our Framework has been further subdivided into five Core thematic modules using resources we have developed, which have all been mapped to the PSHE Association and statutory DfE requirements.

These five modules form part of a spiral curriculum, delivering content appropriate to each year group:

- 1) **Equality, Diversity & British Values**
- 2) **Personal Safety & Digital Awareness**
- 3) **Relationships and Sex Education**
- 4) **Modern Dangers: Online and Offline**
- 5) **Healthy Bodies & Emotional Wellbeing**

The programme of study identifies the key concepts and skills that underpin PSHE education and helps schools to fulfil their statutory responsibility to support pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Relationships (Health) and Sex Education (RSHE) is a requirement; our school adheres to the statutory guidance from the Department for Education.

The programme is taught through a range of teaching methods, based on active engagement in learning. Pupils need opportunities to consider and clarify their values and beliefs and to rehearse and develop enquiry and interpersonal skills. They also need a comprehensive, balanced, relevant body of factual information to inform their present and future choices.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Overview

We believe RSE is an important aspect of the PSHE programme which makes a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by students to establish and maintain positive, healthy relationships. RSE enables young people to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their health and wellbeing. It supports students in forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex and sexuality, relationships and feelings.

RSE is taught in a spiral curriculum, meaning that topics are repeated as they progress up the year groups adding further detail to the subject for an age-appropriate understanding. Resources for teaching are taken from the PSHE Association and Cre8tive Curriculum. The content that is studied is summarised below and follows the statutory Health Education Guidance for RS(H)E 2020.

Year 7 – Friendships, Respect and Relationships

This unit looks at consent and boundaries and evaluates why personal space and boundaries are important when growing up. It then looks at the wide range of relationships that young people have and the qualities of good friendships. The unit then finishes looking at how to manage these relationships and looks at pressures and influences within different types of relationships.

Year 8 – Identity, Relationships and Sex Education

This unit starts with an introduction to RSE looking at what makes a healthy relationship. It deals with conflict that can happen within relationships. Students will look at the difference between sex and gender and the harmful prejudices and stereotypes that can be associated with these. All students learn about the menstrual cycle. The unit finishes with a brief look at what is love and an introduction to the concept of contraception.

Year 9 – Sex the Law and Consent

Year 9 starts looking at the law concerning sexual consent and FGM. It then looks at delaying sexual activity and the pressures that can be associated with this. It covers the positive and negative reasons to have sex and explores the consequences of making a relationship sexual. Then to finish students, debate the sexualisation of the media and the impact this is having on teens.

Year 9 - Contraception and STIs

In the second half term of RSE Year 9 study STIs in detail. They then look at different forms of contraception looking at how they work and the pros and cons of each type. The realities of contraception and the link between pregnancy and STIs are also studied. The laws and legal frameworks linked to sexual harassment and stalking are explored and knowing the difference between flirting and sexual harassment. The unit finishes looking at HIV and AIDS in more detail.

Year 10 – Exploring Relationships and Sex Education

This looks at the legal, emotional and social consequences of sending sexts. This is then explored further with pornography looking at what is and is not legal and identifying the differences between what is seen in pornography and real life. It explores how common access to pornographic material can affect attitudes and beliefs towards sex, relationships and self. Sexual violence is covered looking at assault and rape. The unit progresses onto pleasure and looks at masturbation and the risk associated with different sexual activities.

Year 11 – Sexual Health

Year 11s study the importance of their sexual health and the impact bad choices can have. They revisit contraception and STIs in further detail. They look at respect in relationships and the importance of this. They then look at fertility and what can impact fertility, leading on to different types of fertility treatment.

PSHE EDUCATION INTENT

PSHE INTENT

The PSHE curriculum aims to produce students who are equipped with life skills which allow them to be fully participating members of a fast-changing British and global society. Using The Corsham School PSHE curriculum, our students will develop a sense of self-worth and confidence to be the best version of themselves. They will mature into individuals who can think independently and critically, and have the knowledge to make informed choices around their physical, mental, sexual, emotional and economic wellbeing.

The spiral nature of the curriculum allows them to revisit areas and explore them at an age-appropriate level and provides our students with opportunities to reflect on and clarify their values and attitudes, allowing them to engage in a meaningful way with a world where values and attitudes may be complex and at times in direct conflict with their own.

The RSE elements of the curriculum allow our students to understand appropriate behaviours which will help them to develop and maintain healthy relationships. This is an important aspect of PSHE. This may be in the form of working collaboratively in a group or pair to produce possible responses to scenarios that students might encounter in life or reflecting on how they will use their acquired knowledge to make positive choices in their own lives as they move through school.

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. 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 pupils' moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive character traits, including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness.

PSHE DIFFERENTIATION

In PSHE, we have high learning expectations for all students. It is essential that all our students are challenged to think deeply about the different aspects of PSHE and their rights and responsibilities in respect of being caring, thoughtful and productive individuals. A range of strategies will be used to achieve appropriate levels of differentiation. Students may be given thinking time before being asked questions, sometimes with the opportunity to share their ideas in discussion with a partner or in a small group to improve understanding.

All students will be asked to contribute to lessons, though due to the sensitive nature of some areas of the curriculum, there will be an awareness on the part of the teacher that a student may not wish to share a response with a larger group of their fellow students, and therefore it may at times be appropriate to allow for collecting anonymised responses to share.

Consistent referencing back to earlier learning and linking this to wider society and the modern world will assist students in making sense of how the knowledge and skills they acquire in PSHE apply to real life. Questions will be asked at an appropriate level of challenge for individual students, and where appropriate, students will be encouraged to develop further independent research into different aspects of a particular topic.

Students with additional needs can also be further supported through scaffolded activities provided in the student work booklets for every unit.

LITERACY & NUMERACY IN PSHE

A shared understanding of particular vocabulary is important in PSHE. A high level of skill in communication is essential when presenting an opinion or point of view, and an understanding that such communication needs to utilize precise, neutral and non-offensive language to convey the intended meaning. Evidence supporting a particular position should be presented in the same way, and topic-specific vocabulary used where appropriate.

In respect of literacy in PSHE you will find every lesson in the curriculum will introduce students to new terminology and this will be highlighted on the first slide of every lesson and will be recorded in the SOW.

Expectations for students following the Cre8tive PSHE Curriculum will be as follows;

- Be able to present an opinion or point of view which is clear in meaning
- Use subject-specific vocabulary in an appropriate context
- Present evidence to support a particular opinion which uses precise, neutral and non-offensive language
- Be able to understand numeral data presented in graphic forms, such as pie charts, bars and other types of graphs
- Be able to calculate percentages and work percentages backwards into original amounts
- Be able to analyse simple statistical information and decide if it meets a standard for statistical significance

SMSC Cross-curricular links

Spiritual

- Exploring beliefs and experiences
- Respecting faiths, feelings and values
- Enjoying learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world
- Using imagination and creativity
- Reflecting on own values and beliefs

Moral

- Recognising different ideas of right and wrong, and how these sit with personal moral compasses
- Respecting the law
- Understanding the consequences of actions and behaviours
- Exploring moral and ethical issues
- Offering reasoned viewpoints in concise, neutral and non-offensive language

Social

- Engaging with Fundamental British Values
- Working collaboratively with others
- Linking learning to wider society

Cultural

- Appreciating the role of culture in shaping individual values and opinions
- Understanding, accepting, respecting and celebrating diversity

Fundamental British Values

The unit contained within the themes of Celebrating Diversity and Equality and Rights, Responsibilities and British Values explores all the fundamental British values with a particular focus on democracy.

Parental Information

Celebrating Diversity and Equality underlines respecting differences through mutual respect, tolerance of those with different beliefs and the right to individual liberty. Individual liberty is also explored in learning about trade unionism and vaccination.

Other Subject areas links

The subjects are part of the basic school curriculum, which allows schools flexibility in developing their planned programme, integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum.

Science

Key Stage 3 and 4, includes teaching about reproduction in humans. For example, the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS. Stem cell research and associated ethical considerations.

Business Studies and Economics

Entrepreneurship, Consumer and employment rights, Trade unions and industrial action and the impact on the economy

Sports Studies

Healthy eating, using stress to optimize performance. Health education can complement what is taught through PE by developing core knowledge and a broader understanding that enables people to lead healthy, active lives.

Psychology

Different forms of mental illness, treatments and societal understanding of mental illness.

Computing.

E-safety, with progression in the content to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older. This includes how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, and where to go for help and support.