



KINGSTONE ACADEMY TRUST
APPROVED POLICY DOCUMENT

Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy	
Relevant School/s:	KHS
Policy Officers:	M Morris & R Finch
Approved By:	Board of Trustees
Date of Review:	September 2026
Next Review:	Annually or in light of changes to legislation
Distribution:	Public, on website

1. Introduction

As an Academy, we share similar aims and values regarding the delivery of our Relationships and Sex Education curriculum across the Trust. Due to differences in the age-appropriate curriculum content, Kingstone High School and Kingstone and Thruxton Primary School have separate policies, written in consultation with each other. To see the RSHE Policy for Kingstone and Thruxton Primary School, please visit their website: <https://www.kingstone-thruxton.hereford.sch.uk>

2. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

We believe RSHE is a vital component of delivering a broad and informative curriculum. Our school values of 'courage, kindness and aspiration' are closely aligned with much of the RSHE's core teachings and delivering a comprehensive RSHE curriculum will only further help our students flourish and achieve their full potential.

3. Statutory Requirements

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSHE to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). In teaching RSHE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At Kingstone High School, we teach RSHE as set out in this policy. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff (MBO) pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance: these include PHSE Association guidance and LA SRE review feedback
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations during SPHERE CPD and training.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties are invited to attend an annual meeting and have regular communication through the Parent Newsletter
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSHE via student voice
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with trustees and ratified

5. Definition

Relationships, sex and health education will:

- Provide young people with the information they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds
- Focus on pupils having respect for themselves and others
- Not normalise early sexual experimentation
- Cover a range of topics, including topics related to abusive behaviour, along with teaching pupils how to stay safe, including online
- Combine sharing information with exploring issues and values
- Emphasise the relationship between physical health and mental wellbeing
- Aim to reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular relating to mental health, and discourage the pejorative use of language related to ill health
- Support pupils to understand their changing bodies and their feelings, how to protect their own health and wellbeing, and when a physical or mental health issue requires attention

6. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out in Appendix 1, within the SPHERE programme but we may adapt it as and when necessary. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students.

If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

The school will use a wide range of supporting resources to enhance its planned RSHE curriculum, these include Jigsaw 11-16, EC Publishing and Cre8tive PSHE. This will be used to support the delivery of the RSHE and PSHE requirements in conjunction with the guidance of the DfE in Appendix 2. Jigsaw PSHE 11-16 is an online, comprehensive, evidence-informed curriculum programme. The programme focuses on the development of critical life skills, emotional resilience, and wellbeing, integrating key topics such as relationships, mental health, online safety, and personal development. It has a spiral, RSHE compliant curriculum programme designed to build on core skills year after year, ensuring continuous growth and deeper understanding as students progress through the programme.

Resources or materials will be formally assessed prior to use by Martin Booy, Head of SPHERE and Rachel Finch Assistant Headteacher.

7. Delivery of RSHE

At KS3 and KS4 our delivery of RSHE is through the SPHERE Programme, which stands for Social, Personal, Health, Economy, Relationships and Environment, that explores RSHE, alongside other topics within the PHSE Curriculum, in an age-appropriate way. This is delivered in 1 x 60 minutes session per week delivered by Form Tutors, plus a weekly assembly per year group and planned drop down days throughout the year.

Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

The school will make sure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way and within a planned scheme of work
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge, so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations
- “Over blocking” by the trust’s (or individual schools’) filtering and monitoring system doesn’t lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught

RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships, including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Health education will build on the primary health and wellbeing curriculum content.

RSHE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching. The RSHE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

Effective teaching will be participative and interactive and will give pupils opportunities to develop skills and to discuss and critically evaluate complex relationship scenarios. When teaching sensitive topics, teachers will consider using approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion, and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

Teachers will make sure that pupils understand the importance of equality and respect and learn about the law. This will include learning about the rights and protections from discrimination relating to the protected characteristics, including gender reassignment as set out in the Equality Act 2010, by the end of their secondary education.

The school will:

- Make sure that all pupils are taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment, recognising that people have legal rights by virtue of their

biological sex which are different from the rights of those of the opposite sex with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Pupils will also be taught to recognise that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, as with the other protected characteristics, have protection from discrimination and should be treated with respect and dignity

- Be mindful in teaching the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate
- Not endorse any particular view or teach this as fact – for example, the school will not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity

Avoid:

- Any language or activities that repeat or enforce gender stereotypes
- Any suggestion that social transition is a simple solution to feelings of distress or discomfort

Throughout each year group we will use appropriate material to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Games
- Discussions and practical activities

Teachers will make sure that all pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the age of the pupils.

The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to make sure both are actively involved.

The school will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

At all points of delivery of the curriculum, the school will consult parents and carers, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how will be planned in conjunction with parents and carers.

It is important for secondary pupils to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSHE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help pupils identify what is right and wrong and can provide a foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion. These topics include, but are not limited to:

- Marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty
- Sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, including grooming and sextortion

- Pornography
- Abortion
- The protected characteristics
- The age of criminal responsibility

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance and share any relevant materials on request.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents among other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

Across our school, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property or hate crime.

7.1 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is accessible to pupils with SEND
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:

- A whole class setting
- Small groups or targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats

Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

7.2 Use of Resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age and maturity of the pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

We will make sure that when we consult parents/carers we provide a representative sample of the resources that the school plans to use.

We will ensure that parents/carers are able to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE on request.

Parents/carers are not able to veto curriculum content.

We will comply with any applicable copyright laws when sharing resources with parents or carers and will include a statement that parents agree to as a condition of access that the content should not be copied or shared further except as authorised under copyright law.

8. Use of External Organisations and Materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are accurate, age and stage appropriate and unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSHE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case-study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with

Be clear on:

- What they're going to say
- Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We won't, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme
- Work with agencies who don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Head of School to account for its implementation.

The board has delegated the approval of this policy to the Quality & Standards Committee.

The board of trustees will ensure 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 the guidance
- 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

9.2 CEO

The CEO will:

- Work with Heads of School to make sure they can implement the policy in their school
- Report to the board of trustees on any issues with its implementation across the trust

9.3 The Head of School

The Head of school is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSHE (see section 10), and for ensuring staff receive regular and up to date training.

9.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a way that is sensitive high-quality and appropriate for each year group
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non - statutory components of RSHE

- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes
- Where misogynistic ideas are expressed at school, challenging the ideas, rather than the person expressing them
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Mr Dave Cook

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Head of School.

9.5 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

10. Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. The school will make sure that pupils know they have this option.

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child 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.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the Head of School.

A copy of the withdrawal request will be placed in the student's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action and provide the parents/carers with their decision in writing.

In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a student's specific vulnerability, the Head of School can refuse a request to withdraw the pupil from sex education.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

11. Training

Staff are trained in the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar including toolkit and drop-in sessions and new staff/ ECT training.

On-line training on aspects of RSHE is available to all staff through the National College.

The Head of School may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by Rachel Finch through:

- Learning Walks
- Student Voice
- Curriculum reviews and Deep Dives

Students' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Assistant Headteacher, Rachel Finch, annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by KAT Trustees.

Appendix 1: By the end of Secondary School pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children • Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony • That 'common-law marriage' is a myth, and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children • That forced marriage and marriage before the age of 18 are illegal • How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships. • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development. • How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• About the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships • How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal • The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others • What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs • The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict • The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration • The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care and attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says 'yes' to doing something that doesn't automatically make it ethically okay • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice • How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others • How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others • How some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called 'involuntary celibates' (incels) or online influencers
Online safety and awareness	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material they provide provides to another has the potential to be shared and circulated online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. They should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues • Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images • About the characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and/or may post things which aren't real or have been created with AI. They should also know that social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online • That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime (even if the photo is of themselves or someone who has consented, and even if the photo was created by that child and/or using AI). That there are potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating these images. That sharing indecent images of people over 18 without their consent is also a crime • How to seek support. They should also understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared • What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information,

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	images or videos, and how to manage issues online • About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them • That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons • Where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamourise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong • That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice • How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns • That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. That this can affect people who see pornographic content accidentally, as well as those who see it deliberately. That pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online • That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (for example, to enable targeted advertising) • That criminals can operate online scams, such as using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion • That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. That it is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk
Being safe	• How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent • That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others • How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	• How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. About ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. That there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. About the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and they should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions • What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it • That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language, attention or touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting • About concepts and laws relating to: ▪ Sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault ▪ Harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language ▪ Domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour ▪ Harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation ▪ Forced marriage ▪ Female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty • That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed • That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury • That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death • That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful • How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour, or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault
Intimate and sexual	• That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive • The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
relationships, including sexual health	older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex • About sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, such as the law, their faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • That some sexual behaviours can be harmful • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) • About the use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma • About the prevalence of STIs, the short and long-term impact they can have on those who contract them, and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour • How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms • How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
Mental wellbeing	• How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary • The benefits and importance of physical activity, sleep, time outdoors, community participation and volunteering or acts of kindness for mental wellbeing and happiness • That happiness is linked to being connected to others. Pupils should be supported to understand what makes them feel happy and what makes them feel unhappy, while recognising that loneliness can be for most people an inevitable part of life at times and is not something of which to be ashamed • That worrying and feeling down are normal, can affect everyone at different times and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition, and that managing those feelings can be helped by seeing them as normal

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	• Characteristics of common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression), including carefully-presented factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental health conditions. This should not be discussed in a way that encourages normal feelings to be labelled as mental health conditions • How to critically evaluate which activities will contribute to their overall wellbeing • How to overcome anxiety or other barriers to participating in fun, enjoyable or rewarding activities – that it's possible to overcome those barriers using coping strategies, and that finding the courage to participate in activities which initially feel challenging may decrease anxiety over time rather than increasing it. • That gambling can lead to serious mental health harms, including anxiety, depression, and suicide, and that some gambling products are more likely to cause these harms than others • That the co-occurrence of alcohol/drug use and poor mental health is common and that the relationship is bi-directional: mental health problems can increase the risk of alcohol/drug use, and alcohol/drug use can trigger mental health problems or exacerbate existing ones • That stopping smoking can improve people's mental health and decrease anxiety
Wellbeing online	• About the benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing • The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image); how people may curate a specific image of their life online; the impact that an over-reliance on online relationships, including relationships formed through social media, can have • How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours • About the risks related to online gambling and gambling-like content within gaming, including the accumulation of debt • How advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online, understanding the prevalence of misinformation and disinformation online, including conspiracy theories • About the risks of illegal behaviours online, including drug and knife supply or the sale or purchasing of illicit drugs online • About the serious risks of viewing online content that promotes self-harm, suicide or violence, including how to safely report this material and how to access support after viewing it
Healthy eating	• How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay, unhealthy weight gain, and cardiovascular disease • The risks of unhealthy weight gain, including increased risks of cancer, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	• About the impacts of alcohol on diet and unhealthy weight gain
Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping	• The facts about which drugs are illegal, the risks of taking illegal drugs, including the increased risk of potent synthetic drugs being added to illegal drugs, the risks of illicit vapes containing drugs, illicit drugs and counterfeit medicines, and the potential health harms, including the link to poor mental health • About the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances • About the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption • What constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood, and the legal age of sale for alcohol in England • How to increase personal safety while drinking alcohol, including how to decrease the risks of having a drink spiked or of poisoning from potentially fatal substances such as methanol • About the physical and psychological consequences of problem-use of alcohol, including alcohol dependency • About the dangers of the misuse of prescribed and over-the-counter medicines • The facts about the multiple serious harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer and cardiovascular disease), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so • The facts about vaping, including the harms posed to young people, and the role that vapes can play in helping adult smokers to quit
Health protection and prevention, and understanding the healthcare system	• Personal hygiene, germs and how they are spread, including bacteria and viruses, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics • Dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and cleaning between teeth, reducing consumption of sugar-containing food and drinks, and regular check-ups at the dentist • How and when to self-care for minor ailments, and the role of pharmacists as knowledgeable healthcare professionals • The importance of taking responsibility for their own health, and the benefits of regular self-examination and screening • The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination, immunisation and antimicrobial resistance. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils • The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, the importance of screen-free time before bed and removing phones from the bedroom, and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn • The importance of healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy, including the importance of pre-conception health, including taking folic acid. The importance of pelvic floor health. Information on miscarriage and pregnancy loss, and how to access care and support • How to navigate their local healthcare system: what a GP is; when to use A&E / minor injuries; accessing sexual health and family

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	planning clinics; the role of local pharmacies; and how to seek help via local third sector partners which may have specialist services • The concept of Gillick competence. That the legal age of medical consent is 16. That before this, a child's parents will have responsibility for consenting to medical treatment on their behalf unless they are Gillick competent to take this decision for themselves. Pupils should understand the circumstances in which someone over 16 may not be deemed to have capacity to make decisions about medical treatment
Personal safety	• The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, the importance of screen-free time before bed and removing phones from the bedroom, and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn • The importance of healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy, including the importance of pre-conception health, including taking folic acid. The importance of pelvic floor health. Information on miscarriage and pregnancy loss, and how to access care and support • How to navigate their local healthcare system: what a GP is; when to use A&E / minor injuries; accessing sexual health and family planning clinics; the role of local pharmacies; and how to seek help via local third sector partners which may have specialist services • The concept of Gillick competence. That the legal age of medical consent is 16. That before this, a child's parents will have responsibility for consenting to medical treatment on their behalf unless they are Gillick competent to take this decision for themselves. Pupils should understand the circumstances in which someone over 16 may not be deemed to have capacity to make decisions about medical treatment
Basic first aid	• Basic treatment for common injuries and ailments • Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR • The purpose of defibrillators, when one might be needed and who can use them
Developing bodies	• The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health • The facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body, including brain development • About menstrual and gynaecological health, including: what is an average period; period problems such as premenstrual syndrome; heavy menstrual bleeding; endometriosis; and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). When to seek help from healthcare professionals • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and menopause, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women

Appendix 2. Kingstone High School SPHERE Curriculum Plan 2026-27 Key Stage 3

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
1	New Beginnings & Me Friendships, Unhealthy friendships, Understanding emotions & teenage brain, Communication skills, Bullying & Banter, Cyberbullying, Why people bully. Target Setting	Emotional Wellbeing & Me Emotional Wellbeing, Depression, Understanding your brain, Self Esteem & improving self-esteem, Dealing with Stress, Resilience, Growth Mind Sets, Target Setting, Coping with Bereavement	Identity & Me Target Setting, My Identity & Multiple Identities, Prejudice & Discrimination, Gender Identity & Gender Dysphoria, Transphobia, Sexuality & Homophobia, Equality Act 2010
2	Safety & Me Staying Safe, Road Safety, Water Safety, Fire Safety, Healthy Relationships & Boundaries, Peer Pressure, Vaping, Online Safety including AI, fake News, grooming, Sexting, Sexual Pressure, FGM, Virginity Testing, Misogyny, Help & Advice	Money & Me Understanding money, Income & Spending, Budgeting & Saving, Consumer Pressures, Types of Bank Account, Debt & Gambling. Target Setting	Risk & Me Risk & Risky situations, Peer Pressure, Why people join gangs, Gang behaviour and leaving gangs, Knife Crime, County Lines, Grooming & Radicalisation, Gambling
3	Growing Up & Me Puberty – Physical and emotional changes, Periods and Wet Dreams, Personal hygiene, Independence, Coming of Age Ceremonies.	Internet & Me History of Internet, IT in Industry, Features of Internet, Social Media, Fake News, Online Presence, Sexting, The Dark Web, Grooming & Radicalisation, AI & Chatbots, Staying Safe on line	Options & Me Importance of Options, Planning my future, Post 16 Choices, Family & Cultural expectations, What colleges and employers look for. Setting Targets
4	Healthy Living & Me Importance of sleep, exercise & healthy eating, Dangers of energy drinks, Importance of good oral health, Eating disorders, Self harm.	Sex & Me Types of Relationship, Romantic Relationships, Sex & the Law, Sexting, Peer Pressure, Grooming, Arousal & Conception, Pregnancy, Giving Birth, Pornography	Intimate Relationships & Me Types of Relationship, Romantic Relationships, Sex & the Law, Consent & Peer Pressure, Celibacy, Intimacy without Sex, Contraception, Teen pregnancies, STIs, Self checking.
5	Relationships & Me Types of Relationship, Abusive relationships, types of families, Forced and arranged marriages, Gay marriages, Cohabitation & Divorce.	Substances & Me Types of Drugs, Vaccinations, Dangers of Alcohol, Smoking & Vaping, Illegal Drugs, Peer Pressure & Drugs	Money & Me Understanding money, Income & Spending, Budgeting & Saving, Consumer Pressures, Types of Bank Account, Debt & Gambling. Target Setting

6	Rights & Me What are Rights and UDHR? Rights within home and education, role of press, child soldiers, Breast Ironing and FGM, Do animals have rights? Role of Amnesty International Review SMART Targets	Democracy & Me Democracy & Dictatorships, Houses of Parliament, House of Commons, Political Parties, Types of Election, How Laws are made, Role of Police, Types of Court, Life in Prison, Tribunals Review SMART Targets	Communities & Me Types of Community inc. Online Communities. Threats to Communities – Prejudice, Discrimination, Bullying, Islamophobia, Radicalisation, Improving Kingstone Community Review SMART Targets
			NOTE: For 2026/7 Year 9 will also study the Money & Me as this was not covered when in Year 8. From 2027/8 this will be replaced with Democracy & Me

Appendix 2. Kingstone High School SPHERE Curriculum Plan 2026-27 Key Stage 4

	Year 10	Year 11
1	Mental Health & Me Emotional Wellbeing, Depression, Self Esteem & improving self-esteem, Assertiveness, Dealing with Stress, Resilience, Growth Mind Sets, Target Setting, Coping with Bereavement, Supporting people with Mental Health issues	Next Steps & Me Curriculum Vitaes, Personal Profiles, CV Writing, References, Interview Techniques
2	Sexual Health & Me Types of Relationship, Sex & Law, Rape, Assault, Revenge Porn, Consent, Unsafe Sex – Alcohol & Chem Sex, Pornography, Contraception, STIs	Lifestyles & Me Importance of Sleep & Diet, Social Media, Digital Footprints, Fake News, Dangers of the Internet, Dark Web, Selfies & Internet Safety, Body Image & the Media, Fake Tans, Tattoos, Cosmetic Procedures, Eating Disorders, Self-Harm, Blood Donation
3	Family & Me Marriage, Types of family, Forced marriages, Arranged marriages, Domestic Abuse, Divorce, Development of the Foetus, Fertility, Infertility Treatments, Miscarriages, Teen Pregnancies, Adoption, Fostering, Abortion, Religious Views towards Abortion, Parenting Skills,	Money Matters & Me Understanding money, Income & Spending, Budgeting & Saving, Consumer Pressures, Types of Bank Account, Debt Lottery & Gambling. Target Setting
4	Prejudice & Me Prejudice & Discrimination, Rights & Responsibilities, Equality Act, Sexuality, Islamophobia, Role of Press & Reliability of Information	Politics & Me Democracy & Dictatorships, Taxes & Public Services, Local Council, Young people & Politics
6	Work Experience & Me Types of Employment, Opportunities, Career Choices & Employability, Personal Strengths, Goal Setting, Challenging Stereotypes, Online Presence, Safety in Workplace, H&S, Confidentiality & Harassment in the Workplace	

Appendix 3: Parent form: Withdrawal from Sex Education within RSHE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships, health and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL			
Agreed actions from discussion with parents			