



**HOWARD OF
EFFINGHAM
SCHOOL**

Lower Road, Effingham
Surrey KT24 5JR

Tel: 01372 453694
Email: info@thehoward.thpt.org.uk
Web: www.thehoward.org

STW/TIP/Ship's Log/Y8 RSHE curric

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Dear Parents/Carers

RSHE Curriculum – Year 8

All schools in The Howard Partnership Trust are committed to providing a valued and age-appropriate Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum and I am writing to outline the approach at our school.

We have consulted widely with students, parents and carers to develop our approach and have valued the feedback. It is, of course, vital that our RSHE curriculum is age and stage appropriate for all children. The topics valued by all include understanding physical development, staying safe (including online), addressing discrimination, harassment and abuse as well as fostering children's confidence to develop fulfilling relationships of all kinds as they grow up.

The Department for Education introduced updated statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) from September 2026. In response, we have reviewed our curriculum to ensure it continues to provide students with accurate, age-appropriate and relevant learning. New and enhanced areas of study include online safety, AI literacy, healthy relationships, consent, mental wellbeing, personal safety, vaping awareness, reproductive health and understanding the influence of online content. These developments help ensure that our students are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to stay safe, healthy and informed both now and in the future.

Parents and Carers shared that they value knowing which areas are addressed in each year group so that they can further support discussions at home. The approach for your child's year group this year is outlined below. Working in partnership with parents is evidenced to have the greatest impact and most effectively support our young people.

Outline of themes contained within the RSE curriculum this year.

Year 8	Students' lessons are based on relationship values, where to get support during breakdown and loss of relationships, as well as how to report sexual harassment and abuse. Summarised below are key aspects included in the RSHE curriculum to empower students to keep safe and enjoy respectful relationships.
Managing risk and personal safety	Students will learn about identifying risk and managing personal safety in situations, including online. They will learn how to report sexual harassment and assault, while acknowledging difficulties. They will be supported to assess and reduce risk in relation to health, wellbeing, and personal safety and they will learn about the dangers of explicit images in the summer term as well as knife crime. Students will learn about resilience, income and poverty, budgeting, expenditure, debt, online scams and sextortion.
Forming and Maintaining Respectful Relationships and Relationship Values	Students will understand how to manage the breakdown of a relationship (including its digital legacy). This will include loss and change in relationships such as separation, divorce and bereavement and where to find support. They will learn to recognise the influence of drugs and alcohol on decision-making within relationships and social situations. They will learn about AI and media influence. They will continue to learn about the importance of trust in respectful relationships and have the opportunity to <u>reflect on sexual attraction, understanding that everyone has the choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</u>
Positive Relationships	Students will learn about the importance of developing trusting and positive relationships and active listening skills. They will learn about autism and ADHD, inclusion and equality. They will learn about the importance of respecting the protected characteristics as well as similarities, differences, and diversity among people of different race, culture, ability, sex, gender identity, age and sexual orientation. They will learn about prejudice and persecution, LGBT bullying, the equality act, social justice and hate crimes. <u>They will be supported to recognise that sexual attraction and sexuality are diverse. They will be introduced to the portrayal of sex in the media and social media.</u>
Consent	Students will understand the importance of consent - seeking, giving and withdrawing consent (online & in person). They will learn about the impact of sharing sexual images with and without consent. They will be supported to understand peer pressure and how to manage any requests to share images. <u>They will be introduced to understanding safe sex, including contraception choices and consent and pornography and the law.</u>
Contraception and Parenthood	Students will learn about the roles and responsibilities of parents, carers and children in families. <u>They will be supported to understand contraception choices within healthy relationships and the health risks of unprotected sex.</u>
Health	They will learn about types of health, cardiovascular health and diabetes. Risks, illegal and legal substances, dental health, skin protection, steps to protecting physical health, vaccinations, peer pressure and vaping.

Underlined areas of learning are also part of sex education in Year 8.

In accordance with published government guidelines, it is compulsory for all children to engage with relationships education. If you are concerned about your child taking part in specific elements of sex education (underlined), however, you do have the right to withdraw them. The guidance can be accessed using this link: [Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education - a guide for secondary school parents \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672222/Understanding_Relationships_Sex_and_Health_Education_-_a_guide_for_secondary_school_parents.pdf). If you are considering withdrawing your child or have any further queries including wishing to view curriculum materials, please do contact Mr N Stillwell in the first instance.

Thank you for your support with this important area of your child's education.

Yours sincerely

Howard of Effingham School