



**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/Y9 RSHE curric

September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

RSHE Curriculum – Year 9

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 9 Overview	Students' lessons are based on relationship values and an awareness and understanding of a range of harmful relationship criteria and how to seek support. Summarised below are key aspects included in the RSHE curriculum to empower students to keep safe and enjoy respectful relationships.
Bullying, abuse, and discrimination	Students will learn about stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination of individuals and relationships covering prejudice-based language and behaviour (offline and online) including sexism, LGBT phobia, 'banter', racism, ableism, and faith-based prejudice. They will learn about cyber-bullying and harassment. They will also explore media portrayal of relationships/gender stereotypes, incel culture, misogyny <u>and learn how to recognise sexual and emotional abuse, violence, and exploitation in person and online and how to report concerns.</u>
Personal Safety	They will learn about personal safety including: sexual exploitation, grooming, radicalisation and county lines. They will learn how to do SMART planning. They will reflect on changing appearances, cosmetic surgery and weight loss products, mental illness and stigma, social media, mental health and self-esteem, deepfakes and AI, and harmful and illegal online content. They will know about the Gillick Competence Test.
Forming and Maintaining Respectful Relationships	Students will be supported to recognise the services available to support healthy relationships and manage unhealthy relationships and understand how to access them.
Contraception and parenthood	Students will learn how to establish stable and long-term relationships, as well as a fulfilling family life and bringing up children in a range of family dynamics. They will understand the consequences of unintended pregnancies, teen pregnancy, parenting and how to access sources of support for unintended pregnancies.
Positive Relationships	Students will learn the importance of developing trusting and positive relationships and how to access support when issues occur. <u>They will learn about the impact of the portrayal of sex in the media and social media, as well as the dangers of pornography and the impact on real relationships.</u>
Consent	Students will understand the importance of consent. They will know that the seeker of consent is legally and morally responsible for gaining consent and that if consent is not given or is withdrawn, that decision should always be respected. Students will be supported to <u>understand how to gauge readiness for sexual intimacy in trusting relationships and understand that intimate relationships should be safe, respectful and pleasurable.</u>
Puberty and Sexual Health	Students will be supported to understand that intimate relationships should <u>be safe, respectful and pleasurable, whilst recognising different sexualities.</u> They will be taught about safety, sexual health and personal hygiene, <u>including where to access contraception advice and they will know about masturbation (male and female).</u>
Health	They will learn about the teenage brain, risks and personal safety, addiction, drugs and alcohol - physical and psychological effects, belonging, loneliness and inclusion, emergency situations, CPR, cardiac arrest, mental health first aid and support, drugs - the law, safety, classification, supply and possession legislation and health choices (nutrition, stress, sleep).

We have underlined the aspects included in sex education for this year.

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