



becoming RSHE-Ready for September

and PSHE Education in Staffordshire &
Stoke-on-Trent

2026

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CONTENTS

2

<u>3</u>	Introduction
<u>4</u>	Importance of being RSHE-Ready
<u>5</u>	Roadmap to being RSHE-Ready
<u>6.</u>	DfE's Guiding Principles
<u>7.</u>	Local Guiding Principles
<u>8.</u>	Support available from the Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education Service
<u>9.</u>	Useful Local Resources
<u>10.</u>	Checklist

The PSHE Education Service, funded by Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, aims to support the development and delivery of age-appropriate, good quality, consistent PSHE education across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

A strategy for the project has been created, which outlines the key principles and rationale for what makes good quality PSHE education. This guidance document has been created to support local education settings in being RSHE-Ready for September 2026.

Preparing to deliver high-quality PSHE education, that aligns with the updated statutory requirements in September 2026 requires careful planning, reflection, and action. This is a crucial opportunity for PSHE Leads to review current provision, ensure compliance with statutory guidance, and strengthen curriculum intent and delivery. By taking a proactive and structured approach—focused on curriculum quality, staff confidence, policy clarity, and effective engagement with pupils, parents and carers, schools can ensure their PSHE provision is not only compliant but meaningful, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of their pupils. This document outlines the key steps to support you in becoming fully RSHE-ready for the new academic year.



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? 4

Being RSHE-Ready for September 2026 is important because it ensures that your school can deliver high-quality, consistent, and compliant education from the very start of the academic year. The updated guidance becomes statutory from 1st September 2026, so being prepared helps PSHE Leads meet legal expectations and avoid gaps in provision that could place children and young people at risk or leave education vulnerable to challenge.

PSHE also supports effective safeguarding. Many statutory PSHE topics, such as healthy relationships, consent, online safety and mental wellbeing, are directly linked to keeping children and young people safe. A well-planned curriculum taught confidently by trained staff helps children and young people recognise risk, understand boundaries, and seek support when needed.

In addition, utilising the Summer term to ensure RSHE-Ready improves staff confidence and consistency. When staff have clear plans, appropriate resources and training in place before September, they are more likely to deliver sessions effectively and handle sensitive discussions appropriately.

Being prepared also strengthens parents' and carers' trust. Education settings that communicate about PSHE content and approach are more likely to build positive relationships with families and reduce misunderstandings and concerns.

Involving children and young people in the development of the curriculum means that their learning will be relevant to their lives. Following [a recent report](#) that found only 30% of young people felt that PSHE prepared them for adult life, and that PSHE is still "not yet good enough", there is clearly still work to be done.

Finally, it allows education settings to focus on quality rather than catch-up. Instead of reacting to issues in the Autumn term, they can start the year with a coherent, well-sequenced curriculum that meets the needs of children and young people and supports their personal development from day one.

ROADMAP TO BEING RSHE-READY

AUDIT CURRENT PROVISION

Audit your current PSHE programme against the new 2025 RSHE statutory guidance.
Primary
Secondary

1

2

ENGAGE WITH PUPILS AND STAFF

Engagement with pupils is one of the guiding principles outlined in the updated statutory guidance. Find out how they feel about PSHE

Gain an understanding of colleagues' levels of confidence, topic knowledge, subject knowledge and enthusiasm for teaching PSHE.

DEVELOP AND RESOURCE NEW CURRICULUM

Create a coherent, sequenced programme that focuses on building positive attitudes and skills and reflects the local context and needs of pupils. Develop and source resources for the curriculum

3

4

POLICY DEVELOPED, APPROVED AND PUBLISHED

All schools in England must have an up-to-date RSE policy. Parents and carers must be proactively engaged and consulted.

STAFF CPD

Staff receive CPD on guiding principles and PSHE pedagogy as outlined in updated guidance and from staff voice.

5

6

COMMUNICATION

Communication to SLT, parents/carers and staff about the new curriculum, including final policy, scheme of work, and resources



NATIONAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE RSHE

The updated Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (RSHE) has an overarching set of guiding principles that education settings are asked to keep in mind when developing their curriculum.

- **Engagement with pupils.** An inclusive and well-sequenced RSHE curriculum should be informed by meaningful engagement with pupils to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and engaging.
- **Engagement and transparency with parents.** Schools should engage with parents on the content of RSHE and be transparent with parents about all materials used in RSHE. All materials should be available to parents. Parents have a right to request that their children are withdrawn from sex education (pupils can opt back in from three terms before they turn 16), and schools should ensure parents are aware of sex education content within lessons in advance.
- **Positivity.** Schools should focus on building positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships, including sexual relationships where relevant, and about health, including mental health. Schools should avoid language which might normalise harmful behaviour among young people – for example, gendered language which might normalise male violence or stigmatise boys.
- **Careful sequencing.** Schools should cover all statutory topics, recognising that young people can start developing healthy behaviour and relationship skills as soon as they start school. Schools should sequence teaching so that pupils are supported and equipped with the knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, and to prevent harms.
- **Relevant and responsive.** Schools should develop their curriculum to be relevant, age- and stage-appropriate, and accessible to pupils in their area, where appropriate, working with local partners and other bodies to understand specific local issues and ensure that needs are met.
- **Skilled delivery of participative education.** The curriculum should be delivered by school staff or, where schools choose to use them, external providers who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to create a safe and supportive environment and to facilitate participative and interactive education which aims to support and not to alarm pupils. Staff should be trained in safeguarding and offering support, recognising the increased possibility of disclosures.
- **Whole school approach.** The curriculum is best delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships, supported by other school policies, including behaviour and safeguarding policies.

LOCAL KEY PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE PSHE EDUCATION

Within Stoke and Staffordshire we believe that for PSHE education to be effective it must be:

- Delivered within a safe learning environment based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable
- With clear learning objectives and outcomes and ensure sessions and programmes are well-planned, resourced and appropriately underpinned by solid research and evidence.
- Relevant, accurate and factual, including using the correct terminology
- Positively inclusive in terms of:
 - Age;
 - Disability;
 - Gender identity;
 - Pregnancy and maternity;
 - Race;
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex;
 - Sexual orientation
- Designed to include the development of knowledge, skills and values to support positive life choices
- Using positive messaging, that does not cause shame or victim blaming
- Challenging attitudes and values within society, such as perceived social norms and those portrayed in the media
- Reflective of the age and stage of the children and young people and be tailored to the environment and group
- Utilising active skill-based learning techniques that accommodate a range of learning styles
- Ensuring that children and young people are aware of their rights, including their right to access confidential advice and support services within the boundaries of safeguarding
- Delivered by trained, confident and competent professionals
- Empowering and involving children and young people as participants, advocates and evaluators in the development of PSHE education.

ENGAGE WITH THE PAN-STAFFORDSHIRE PSHE EDUCATION SERVICE

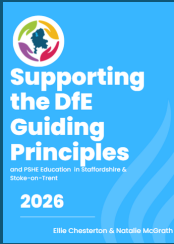
The Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education Service is committed to promoting PSHE development across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. We champion the links between health, behaviour, inclusion and achievement. Our approach builds on strengths to reduce vulnerabilities, applying prevention support to reduce inequalities and promote positive outcomes for children and young people.

RESOURCES



Our Service offer is available for free to all local education settings:

- PSHE Digest - a monthly newsletter, distributed to all education settings on the first termly Friday of each month, giving updates from local and national partners, resources linked to upcoming key awareness dates, training opportunities, and more
- PSHE Leads Network Meetings - Half-termly meetings, providing an opportunity for PSHE Leads to come together and share. Recordings are available from our previous meetings. You need to book your place via our Eventbrite page, and you will then be sent the MS Teams invitation.
- PSHE Bitesize Practice Development Sessions - Webinars to support anyone who delivers PSHE education to help increase their knowledge and confidence on specific topics within the PSHE curriculum.
- ... & PSHE Series - Localised series of professional guides to support linking the topic to curriculum and statutory guidance and also information to upskill staff delivering PSHE with information, statistics, and signposting services.
- Best Practice Guides - Information to advise and guide education providers in implementing best practices in their own settings.



This [guidance document](#) provides useful links to PSHE Leads to help them embed the DfE's Guiding Principles.



This [page on our website](#) provides guidance documents to different elements of best practice that can be utilised when developing CPD or shared with staff. Includes a link to our audit tool.



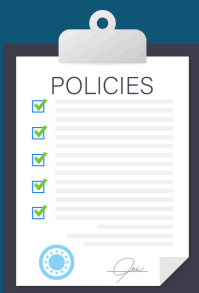
This [page on our website](#) provides links to national and local training webinars and e-learning opportunities, useful podcasts, documentaries and dramas that support CPD.



Here you will find [recordings](#) of previous PSHE Leads Network Meetings that cover various aspects of best practice and information about being RSHE-Ready for September 2026.



This [page on our website](#) contains links relevant to parents and carers. Here you will find training opportunities, letters and information listed by PSHE theme.



Model PSHE Policy Templates

- [First/Primary \(Accessible version\)](#)
- [Middle \(Accessible version\)](#)
- [Secondary/High \(Accessible version\)](#)

RSE READINESS CHECKLIST

10

Use this checklist to assess your current position; you may wish to RAG-rate it or use it as a tick list to help ensure you are RSHE-Ready for September 2026.

1. Leadership and Strategic Oversight

	PSHE has a named lead with clear responsibility
	Senior leaders understand statutory requirements and expectations
	Governors/Trustees are informed and engaged in PSHE provision
	Time is allocated for planning, monitoring, and evaluation

2. Curriculum Review

	Audit of curriculum has been completed
	The audit considers curriculum content and coverage
	The audit considers quality of teaching and learning
	The audit reflects the DfE's 7 Guiding Principles
	Strengths in current provision have been clearly identified
	Gaps and areas for development have been identified
	Pupil voice has been gathered to inform audit
	Findings from the audit have been used to create clear next steps/actions

3. Pupil Voice and Needs Analysis

	Opportunities exist for pupils to ask questions safely
	Opportunities exist for pupils to reflect on learning
	Systems are in place for meaningful engagement with pupils to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and engaging

4. Curriculum Planning and Sequencing

	A fully mapped curriculum plan is in place
	Curriculum shows clear progression across year groups
	Content is age/stage-appropriate and inclusive
	Curriculum reflects statutory requirements
	Curriculum reflects local/contextual needs, risks and issues
	Curriculum is aligned with safeguarding priorities

5. Teaching and Learning Resources

	Resources are up-to-date
	Resources are accurate
	Resources are inclusive
	Resources are strength-based (positivity)
	Resources are adapted for different needs, including SEND
	Resources are interactive and participatory

6. Staff Training and Confidence

	Staff delivering PSHE are trained and prepared
	Staff understand curriculum content
	Staff know how to create a safe learning environment
	Clear guidance is provided for managing questions
	Clear guidance is provided on delivering inclusive content
	Staff know how to utilise interactive and participatory resources
	Staff know how to manage a disclosure
	Staff know how to answer questions
	Non-specialist teachers feel confident and supported
	Ongoing CPD is planned

7. Inclusion

	Curriculum is accessible for all learners
	Adaptations are in place for SEND pupils
	Staff are confident in tailoring the session to meet the needs of their group

8. Policy and Compliance

	PSHE policy is reviewed and updated
	Policy reflects your school's context and pupils needs
	Parents and carers have been consulted/informed
	Policy has been approved by governors/trustees
	Policy has been published on the website
	Systems are in place for handling queries and withdrawals (where applicable)

9. Parents and Carer Engagement

	Parents and carers are informed about curriculum content
	Parents and carers are given opportunities to ask questions
	Opportunities are provided for parents and carers to understand the approach
	Systems are in place for parents and carers to view resources, including those delivered by external providers
	Parents and carers are aware of the process to request their child be withdrawn from sex education only and of a pupils right to opt-back in (if applicable)
	Systems are in place to advise parents and carers of any deviation from the published PSHE/RSE policy
	Parents and carers are supported in talking to their child about topics related to the PSHE curriculum (particularly sex education)

10. Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact

	Systems are in place to monitor delivery
	Systems are in place to evaluate impact
	Review activities include lesson visits or observations
	Review activities include pupil feedback
	Findings inform ongoing improvement

11. Final Readiness Check

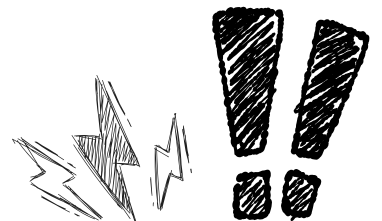
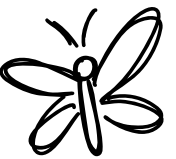
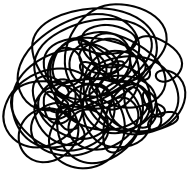
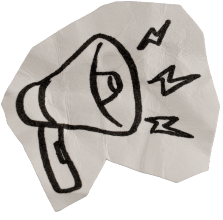
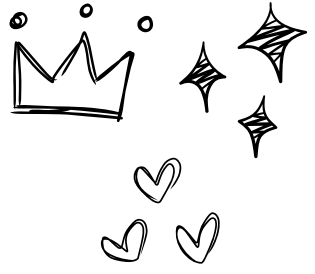
	Audit completed and actions identified
	Policy updated, approved and published
	Staff trained and are confident
	Parents and carers informed
	Delivery ready for September 2026

The Pan-Staffordshire PSHE Education is here to support all aspects of this checklist. If there is any element you would like more support on, or if you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact your local Co-ordinator:

Stoke-on-Trent - ellie@staffscvys.org.uk

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Space for Notes





PSHE

Education

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