

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION, RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION AND HEALTH EDUCATION

RSE - WHAT'S CHANGED? WHAT'S THE SAME?

Many people have seen and heard information about RSHE and its new status. This document intends to clearly set out what is new, what has already been happening and how schools might implement the new requirements.

WHAT ARE RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION, RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION AND HEALTH EDUCATION?

- Relationships Education is a subject which must be taught in Primary schools. It includes teaching on 'Families', 'Friendships', 'Respectful Relationships', 'Online Relationships' and 'Being Safe'.
- Relationships and Sex Education is a subject which must be taught at secondary level from September 2020. It includes teaching on 'Families', 'Respectful relationships including friendships', 'Online and media', 'Being Safe' and 'Intimate and sexual relationships'.
- Health Education must be taught at both primary and secondary levels from September 2020. It includes teaching on 'Mental wellbeing', 'Internet safety and harms', 'Physical health and fitness', 'Healthy eating', 'Drugs, alcohol and tobacco', 'Health and prevention', 'Basic first aid' and 'Changing adolescent body'.
- All 'new' subjects should be taught as part of a planned PSHE curriculum which meets the needs of pupils and which builds on ideas and skills as pupils get older.
- Most schools nationwide have been delivering much of this content for many years. There has been a duty for schools to promote pupils' wellbeing (Education Act 2006), to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society (National Curriculum 2014), to prepare children for life in modern Britain (National Curriculum 2014), to offer a broad and balanced curriculum (National Curriculum 2014) and to ensure that all pupils are treated equally (Equalities Act 2010).
- The new legislation requires the same teaching in all schools; state schools and independent schools, maintained schools, academies and free schools. All schools must teach **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education** and **Health Education**.

WHY HAVE THESE SUBJECTS BEEN MADE STATUTORY?

- There have been calls for RSE for many years from a range of organisations: Women and Equalities committee, Education Select committee, NSPCC and reports on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) (Manchester, Rotherham)
- There has been a nationwide concern about sexual abuse of children, child sexual exploitation (CSE), sexting, consent, pornography, self-harm, mental health, social media. These issues are addressed through RSE and Health Education.
- Well taught RSE has the effect of:
 - raising the age of first sexual activity
 - making it more likely that abuse will be reported
 - making it less likely that young people describe their first sex as unwanted
 - reducing the likelihood that young people will contract a sexually transmitted infection (STI)
 - making it less likely young people will have an unwanted pregnancy
- The majority of parents support the teaching of RSE.

WHAT HAS STAYED THE SAME WITH THE NEW LEGISLATION?

- Schools have always had a duty to communicate with parents about the content and delivery of RSE (RSE Guidance 2000)
- Parents/carers still have the right to ask that their child be excused from 'sex education'.
- There are still overlaps between the content of the Science Curriculum, RSE and Health Education.

- Schools have had to follow Equalities Act since 2010.
- Schools still have to consider how they will respond sensitively to pupils' questions which go beyond the planned curriculum.
- There is still no prescription about when different concepts should be introduced. Schools should decide this based on the ages and needs of their pupils.

WHAT HAS CHANGED WITH THE NEW LEGISLATION?

- Areas of learning are now specified, previously coverage was up to the school.
- All schools must teach a well-planned, developmental RHE and RSHE curriculum. It is no longer optional.
- A student now has the right to opt back into to 'sex education' three terms before their 16th birthday, overriding their parents' views.

WHAT HAPPENS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL?

- Every child has a right to feel accepted, valued and safe in school regardless of their gender, family background, religion, race or identity.
- Every school should take steps to ensure that every child sees themselves and their families reflected in their school environment.
- Primary schools should consider the needs of their pupils and ensure that the curriculum includes a progression of skills and ideas from Reception to Year 6.
- A child will usually receive their regular PSHE lessons from a teacher who knows them and their families.
- Children at primary schools are taught about human sexual reproduction as part of 'sex education'. There are many overlaps with national curriculum for science which includes teaching about sexual reproduction in animals. Parents can ask their child be excused from teaching about human sexual reproduction at primary.
- Every child will be taught about their bodies and that they have the right to say what happens to their bodies as part of Relationships Education. This is to enable children to keep themselves safe from abuse and exploitation.
- Every child will be taught about how their body and brain will change as they get older as part of Health Education. They will get timely information about puberty and how to manage it.
- Every child will explore attitudes, stereotypes and behaviour to build self-awareness and confidence.
- Every child will explore how to ask trusted adults for help and how to be supportive to their peers.

WHAT WILL NOT HAPPEN IN PRIMARY SCHOOL?

- There is no teaching about sexual pleasure in primary school.
- There is no teaching about sexual practices, other than human sexual reproduction as part of 'sex education'.
- Teachers will not raise the profile of any family type, lifestyle, identity or sexuality over another.
- Children will not be asked to share information about their families in class situation unless they want to.

WHAT MIGHT CHILDREN LEARN AT SECONDARY?

- Every child will learn they have the right to feel accepted, valued and safe in school regardless of their family background, religion, race or identity.
- Pupils will learn to develop their skills to ensure that all their relationships are healthy with friends, teachers, parents and potential intimate partners.
- Pupils will learn about healthy relationships through other subject areas such as Drama, English and RE.
- Pupils will learn some aspects of the RSE and Health Education Curriculum through Science.
- Pupils will learn the law, preparing them for life in modern Britain, whether that life be in their current community or another one.

ARE FAITH PERSPECTIVES INCLUDED IN RSE?

- The views of different faiths (and groups within them) and cultural groups can be explored alongside medical facts/science and the law in our country.
- Pupils will learn to listen to and engage respectfully with people who hold different views to theirs'.
- The views of different faiths on matters pertaining to families, relationships and health are also discussed in other subjects such as Religious Education.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR MY CHILD?

- Look out for topic plans on the school website for information about the school curriculum and what your child will be learning.
- Ask to see the school's RSE policy and raise any questions you have.
- If the school ask for parental voices as they develop or review their policy, offer your time and views.
- Support your child's learning at home, by reading with them, asking their views on what they have learnt.
- Be the trusted adult who offers their child unconditional love and non-judgemental support, so they know they can always come to you if they have worries or concerns about friendships or relationships as they grow up.