

## **New Statutory Requirements for teaching RSE in secondary, Relationships Education in Primary and Health Education in all schools**

### **What the new requirements are and what they will mean from September 2020 Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **What are the new statutory requirements?**

The government is introducing new compulsory subjects from September 2020:

- All primary schools will have to teach Relationships Education
- All secondary schools will have to teach Relationships and Sex Education
- All schools will have to teach Health Education

#### **Government Guidance**

The government consulted on draft guidance in October 2018 and this was updated on February 25<sup>th</sup> 2019. The updated [draft guidance](#), will be finalised in the next few weeks.

#### **What will be taught in Relationships Education in primary?**

Pupils will be taught about 5 topics

1. Families and people who care for me
2. Caring friendships
3. Respectful relationships
4. Online relationships
5. Being safe

The government's updated draft guidance sets out the detail about what pupils should know by the end of primary for Relationships Education.

The main focus is on teaching in an age-appropriate way about what makes positive, healthy relationships- friendships and family relationships and relationships with other children and adults. Very young children will be taught about taking turns, being kind and respectful. As they get older, this will include online safety and appropriate online behaviour.

#### **What will be taught in Health Education in primary?**

Pupils will be taught about 8 topics

1. Mental wellbeing
2. Internet safety and harms
3. Physical health and fitness
4. Healthy eating
5. Drugs and alcohol and tobacco
6. Health and Prevention
7. Basic first aid
8. Changing adolescent body

The government's updated draft guidance sets out the detail about what pupils should know by the end of primary for Health Education.

#### **How will schools decide what to teach in each Year?**

The government guidance sets out what schools should teach by the end of primary school and does not divide the content into Years. Schools will develop their own curriculum and teaching programme which meets the needs of their pupils and which takes account of the government guidance about what pupils should know by the end of primary, as well as

comply with the Equality Act 2010, as they do now. Schools will need to take account of the age and maturity of pupils when deciding what to teach in each Year and consider how to link this with related subjects such as science, computing and PE. This flexibility enables schools to respond to local public health and community issues and ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all their pupils.

Schools should develop the curriculum in consultation with parents.

Schools are free to determine how they deliver the content of the new subjects. The guidance acknowledges that effective teaching will be within a planned programme or lessons, with the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work as for other curriculum areas. Many schools will choose to deliver the new requirements within their established PSHE programmes.

### **Does the new Relationships Education take account of my faith?**

The government has introduced the subjects to help children from all backgrounds to understand what makes a happy, healthy and safe relationship (including friendships) and to develop tolerance and understanding of all aspects of diversity to help them thrive in modern Britain. Schools must take account of the religious background of pupils when planning and teaching the subjects.

### **Will parents be able to withdraw their child from Relationships Education?**

No. Relationships Education will be compulsory for all children in primary school

### **Will primary schools have to teach sex education?**

The government is not making sex education compulsory in primary schools. There are biological aspects of sex education covered in the national curriculum for science, which is compulsory for all pupils and will remain compulsory. From September 2020 all primary schools will have to teach about puberty as part of statutory health education.

It will be up to schools to decide whether they need to teach any additional content on sex education, in addition to the biological aspects in science. Although this is not compulsory the government guidance recommends that all primary schools should have a sex education programme "tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils".

Schools who choose to teach additional content on sex education, should consult with parents on what is to be covered and then let parents know what will be taught and when, and the resources that will be used. Parents should be consulted before Year 6 about what will be taught.

Schools should offer parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school.

If a school chooses to teach any sex education in addition to the statutory elements they can produce a policy setting out their definition of sex education and a parent's right to request they withdraw their child.

### **Will I be able to withdraw my child from Sex Education in primary?**

Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from the science national curriculum, as is the case now. Parents will not be able to withdraw from puberty in Health Education. If parents have concerns about any additional sex education that is taught, they should discuss this with the school. Parents have the right to request to withdraw their child from the sex education that sits outside the science curriculum, and the request will be automatically granted.

Schools will let parents know whether they will be choosing to teach sex education in addition to science and that they have the right to request to withdraw their child from that additional sex education.

### **Will primary schools teach about different families?**

Yes. The government guidance states that pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. The new subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships. The government guidance states that in primary schools, pupils should know that “there are different types of families and that they should respect those differences”, that “families can include single parents families, LGBT parents, adoptive parents” and that “stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children’s security as they grow up”.

### **What does the government guidance say about LGBT?**

Government guidance states that “In teaching Relationships Education in primary, schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

When teaching relationships education, schools should ensure that it is age-appropriate. It will be up to schools to decide when they teach pupils about LGBT, and they should fully integrate it into the curriculum rather than deliver it as a stand-alone unit or lesson. The government expects that all pupils will be taught LGBT content “at a timely point” as part of this area of the curriculum. The government guidance states that primary schools should know that “there are different families and that they should respect those differences”. This means that in primary schools children will know about a wide range of families including families where there are same sex parents.

When teaching about marriage, this will cover both opposite sex and same sex couples.

### **Will schools have to consult with parents about what they teach?**

Schools will be required to consult with parents when they develop their Relationships Education policy. The school’s policy will be published on the school’s website and freely available to parents on request.

Schools should consult with parents about the curriculum and provide examples of resources they plan to use, so that parents can continue conversations at home

If a school chooses to teach additional content on sex education, they should consult with parents on what is to be covered and then let parents know what will be taught and when, and the resources that will be used. Parents should be consulted before Year 6 about what will be taught.