



Longmeadow Primary School

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

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“The Department for Education recommends that all Primary Schools should have a Sex and Relationship programme tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of the children. It should ensure that both boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born as set out in Key stages 1 and 2 of the Science National Curriculum.” (House of Commons Research Paper, 2017).

INTRODUCTION - What is RSHE?

Longmeadow Primary School considers that Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an integral part of the Science curriculum and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculum. RSHE is the lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. Pupils are taught about the nature of marriage and its role for family life, and bringing up children (DfES “Sex and Relationships Guidance” 2000). The school also recognises the importance of other strong and mutually supportive relationships. It does not promote any one form of relationship, but ensures there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

At Longmeadow Primary School we believe that effective RSHE is essential to enable children to make informed decisions about their lives and the school is therefore committed to the provision of RSHE.

AIMS

This policy, supported by relevant training, aims to ensure that:

- RSHE is delivered with safeguarding in mind across the school
- RSHE is delivered by knowledgeable and confident staff
- Staff and members are aware of the school’s confidentiality arrangements
- RSHE is delivered in line with core principles that promote equality
- The curriculum supports the school’s behaviour and anti-bullying policy through creating strong, mutually respectful relationships between pupils and the school community
- A clear outline is provided on how the programme is delivered in each year group
- Confidentiality, safeguarding and child protection relate to RSHE.

OBJECTIVES

These objectives complement the National Curriculum for science, for pupils aged 5-11.

- To further develop personal awareness, confidence and responsibility
- To have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others
- To nurture a responsible attitude towards personal relationships including aspects of mutual respect, care and to develop sensitivity towards the needs of others
- To provide knowledge of loving and supportive relationships, the nature and importance of family life
- To develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- To be prepared for puberty
- To provide knowledge of human reproductive processes
- To be able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- To inform children on matters of personal hygiene and related sexual health issues
- To provide knowledge and understanding of keeping safe and the recognition and management of risk
- To develop positive relationships and respect for difference and diversity, avoiding prejudice and stereotyping
- To prevent bullying within the school environment, including eSafety and relationships online both in and out of school
- To support the school's safeguarding culture

OVERVIEW OF TOPICS COVERED:

The school follows the Jigsaw scheme for PSHCE and RSHE. It delivers "Puzzles" (topics) themed as follows:

- Being Me in My World
- Celebrating Difference
- Dreams and Goals
- Healthy Me
- Relationships
- Changing Me

This is how each topic is covered in more detail, from Nursery to Year 6:

	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Nursery and Reception	Self-identity Understanding feelings Being in a classroom Being gentle Rights and responsibilities	Identifying talents Being special Families Where we live Making friends Standing up for yourself	Challenges Perseverance Goal-setting Overcoming obstacles Seeking help Jobs Achieving goals	Exercising bodies Physical activity Healthy food Sleep Keeping clean Safety	Family life Friendships Breaking friendships Falling out Dealing with bullying Being a good friend	Bodies Respecting my body Growing up Growth and change Fun and fears Celebrations
Year 1	Feeling special and safe Being part of a class Rights and responsibilities Rewards and feeling proud Consequences Owning the Learning Charter	Similarities and differences Understanding bullying and knowing how to deal with it Making new friends Celebrating the differences in everyone	Setting goals Identifying successes and achievements Learning styles Working well and celebrating achievement with a partner Tackling new challenges Identifying and overcoming obstacles Feelings of success	Keeping myself healthy Healthier lifestyle choices Keeping clean Being safe Medicine safety/safety with household items Road safety Linking health and happiness	Belonging to a family Making friends/being a good friend Physical contact preferences People who help us Qualities as a friend and person Self-acknowledgement Being a good friend to myself Celebrating special relationships	Life cycles – animal and human Changes in me Changes since being a baby Differences between female and male bodies (correct terminology) Linking growing and learning Coping with change Transition
Year 2	Hopes and fears for the year Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Safe and fair learning environment Valuing contributions Choices Recognising feelings	Assumptions and stereotypes about gender Understanding bullying Standing up for self and others Making new friends Gender diversity Celebrating difference and remaining friends	Achieving realistic goals Perseverance Learning strengths Learning with others Group co-operation Contributing to and sharing Success	Motivation Healthier choices Relaxation Healthy eating and nutrition Healthier snacks and sharing food	Different types of family Physical contact boundaries Friendship and conflict Secrets Trust and appreciation Expressing appreciation for special Relationships	Life cycles in nature Growing from young to old Increasing independence Differences in female and male bodies (correct terminology) Assertiveness Preparing for transition
Year 3	Setting personal goals Self-identity and worth Positivity in challenges Rules, rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Responsible choices Seeing things from others' Perspectives	Families and their differences Family conflict and how to manage it (child-centred) Witnessing bullying and how to solve it Recognising how words can be hurtful Giving and receiving Compliments	Difficult challenges and achieving success Dreams and ambitions New challenges Motivation and enthusiasm Recognising and trying to overcome obstacles Evaluating learning processes Managing feelings Simple budgeting	Exercise Fitness challenges Food labelling and healthy swaps Attitudes towards drugs Keeping safe and why it's important online and off line scenarios Respect for myself and others Healthy and safe choices	Family roles and responsibilities Friendship and negotiation Keeping safe online and who to go to for help Being a global citizen Being aware of how my choices affect others Awareness of how other children have different lives Expressing appreciation for family and friends	How babies grow Understanding a baby's needs Outside body changes Inside body changes Family stereotypes Challenging my ideas Preparing for transition
Year 4	Being part of a class team Being a school citizen Rights, responsibilities and democracy (school council) Rewards and consequences Group decision-making Having a voice What motivates behaviour	Challenging assumptions Judging by appearance Accepting self and others Understanding influences Understanding bullying Problem-solving Identifying how special and unique everyone is First impressions	Hopes and dreams Overcoming disappointment Creating new, realistic dreams Achieving goals Working in a group Celebrating contributions Resilience Positive attitudes	Healthier friendships Group dynamics Smoking Alcohol Assertiveness Peer pressure Celebrating inner strength	Jealousy Love and loss Memories of loved ones Getting on and Falling Out Girlfriends and boyfriends Showing appreciation to people and animals	Being unique Having a baby Girls and puberty Confidence in change Accepting change Preparing for transition Environmental change
Year 5	Planning the forthcoming year Being a citizen	Cultural differences and how they can cause conflict	Future dreams The importance of money	Smoking, including vaping Alcohol	Self-recognition and self-worth Building self-esteem	Self- and body image Influence of online and media on

	Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences How behaviour affects groups Democracy, having a voice, Participating	Racism Rumours and name-calling Types of bullying Material wealth and happiness Enjoying and respecting other cultures	Jobs and careers Dream job and how to get there Goals in different cultures Supporting others (charity) Motivation	Alcohol and anti-social behaviour Emergency aid Body image Relationships with food Healthy choices Motivation and behaviour	Safer online communities Rights and responsibilities online Online gaming and gambling Reducing screen time Dangers of online grooming SMARRT internet safety rules	body image Puberty for girls Puberty for boys Conception (including IVF) Growing responsibility Coping with change Preparing for transition
Year 6	Identifying goals for the year Global citizenship Children's universal rights Feeling welcome and valued Choices, consequences and rewards Group dynamics Democracy, having a voice Anti-social behaviour Role-modelling	Perceptions of normality Understanding disability Power struggles Understanding bullying Inclusion/exclusion Differences as conflict, difference as celebration Empathy	Personal learning goals, in and out of school Success criteria Emotions in success Making a difference in the world Motivation Recognising achievements Compliments	Taking personal responsibility How substances affect the body Exploitation, including 'county lines' and gang culture Emotional and mental health Managing stress	Mental health Identifying mental health worries and sources of support Love and loss Managing feelings Power and control Assertiveness Technology safety Take responsibility with technology Use	Self-image Body image Puberty and feelings Conception to birth Reflections about change Physical attraction Respect and consent Boyfriends/girlfriends Sexting Transition

Science, PSHCE and eSafety issues run throughout each year group's topics.

HOW IS RSHE TAUGHT?

RSHE is taught using children's full participation and takes place within normal classroom provision of mixed-gender classes or single-gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant, with the pupils' usual class teacher / teaching assistant. Additional adults may join the lesson, such as a teaching assistant or the school nurse.

The following strategies are used:

- establishing 'ground rules'
- role play and drama
- class discussion
- group discussion
- circle time
- reflection time

We also teach RSHE through other subject areas (eg Science, PE and RE), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of their own body, and how it is changing and developing. Linked with RE and PSHCE, children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved.

Since RSHE incorporates the development of self-esteem and relationships, pupils' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of school life including the playground. It is important then that all staff understand they have a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are dealing with children.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- All teaching and non-teaching staff at our school are responsible for ensuring that all pupils irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity and social circumstances, have access to the whole curriculum and opportunities to make the greatest progress possible in all areas of the curriculum whilst in our school.
- We also recognise the importance of respecting the diverse family circumstances that exist within our school community and seek out resources to reflect these: e.g. single-parent families, same-sex parents/carers, etc.

THE ROLE OF THE PARENT/CARER

The school includes information on Relationship, Sex and Health Education on the school website. We are well aware that the primary role in children's relationship and sex education lies with parents/carers. We endeavour to maintain positive and supportive relationships with our parents/carers by:

- Keeping parents/carers informed of upcoming lessons
- Providing question and answer sessions for parents/carers to attend
- Signposting parents/carers to materials/agencies that can offer support
- Take seriously any issue that parents/carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex education in the school

If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSHE provision, they should discuss this with the member of the school's Senior Leadership Team, who will take time to address their concerns and discuss any fears they may have.

Please refer to Appendix 4 for more information about what curriculum content is statutory, and from which aspects parents/carers can request to withdraw their children.

SAFEGUARDING

Teachers will conduct RSHE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or being likely to be involved, in an activity which

puts them at risk, then the teacher will take this matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of Child Protection. (See school's Child Protection Policy and Appendix 2)

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring is the responsibility of the Governors, Head teacher and Curriculum Leader for RSHE. The effectiveness of the RSHE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing change if required.

APPENDIX 1 - LEARNING MAP RSHE

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Knowledge and Skills to be taught:</u>
Early Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To introduce children to life cycles – simple changes b) Introduce personal safety and keeping your body safe (healthy eating, physical exercise) c) Modelling and promoting creating friendships and healthy relationships between peers and adults – developing respect and manners d) Use technology appropriately and age appropriate
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To explore differences between male and female b) To enable children to reflect on differences between male and female other than physical differences c) Keeping safe online when playing games/apps – who to talk to d) Introduce different types of families and respecting differences
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To enable children to reflect on their development from babies b) To inform children about conception and the growth of a baby in the womb c) To explain that a baby develops inside its mother’s womb and that both the male and female are needed to make a baby (girls and boys are different) d) Introduce Stereotyping and bullying/cyberbullying e) Keeping safe online - identifying that people may sometimes behave differently online f) To look at identity and self-esteem, and reinforce the belief that we are all special g) Keeping your body safe
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To introduce children to the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty b) To consider some of the changes over which we have no control and the choices we can make concerning those over which we do have control c) Explore stereotyping further, understanding that boys and girls can do the same tasks and enjoy them (including job roles) d) Explore the stereotypes of families and how families can all be different e) Online Relationships – same principles apply to online relationships as face to face, respect when being anonymous f) List some commonly available substances and drugs that are legal, describe some of the effects and risks of smoking
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To explain how babies are made b) To explore the idea of relationships, including friendships, parent-child and family relationships and adult sexual relationships c) Name the male and female body parts and use the correct terms d) To explain how a baby develops in the womb during pregnancy and how babies are born e) To consider the needs of babies before and after birth f) Understand that the body changes during puberty g) Identify the physical changes that happen in puberty h) With support, can describe: the stages of human life cycle, and how the body changes as a child grows up i) To enable children to reflect on their roles and relationships in the family j) Demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others, and resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices k) Identify some factors that affect emotional health and well being l) To know that not everything on the internet is true and know what to do if they access something inappropriate. (fake news)
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Explain the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty b) Ask questions about puberty with confidence c) How to keep the body clean and healthy during puberty d) Explain and ask questions about menstruation and wet dreams

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) How to manage these changes that are occurring in the body f) Identify different types of relationships and, with support, show ways to maintain healthy relationships - Positive effects on mental wellbeing from good relationships g) Describe the nature and consequences of bullying, and express ways of responding to it h) Respond to, or challenge negative behaviours such as stereotyping and aggression i) Understands the potential risks of providing personal information in an increasing range of online technologies both within and outside school.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Describe how and why the body changes during in puberty in preparation for reproduction and reassure pupils that their changing emotions are a normal aspect of puberty b) Talk about puberty and reproduction with confidence c) To recognise how sex is presented in the media d) To consider sexual/gender stereotyping e) Explore mental health and wellbeing – where to seek advice and how to manage situations f) List the commonly available substances and drugs that are legal and illegal, describe some of their effects and risks, and explain how to manage the risks in different familiar situations

APPENDIX 2

Ground Rules and Distancing Techniques

Staff members are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of RSHE. To ensure this ground rules have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach. There are clear parameters as to what will be taught in the whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis

- Provision will be made to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (staff member or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way

Answering Difficult Questions

- Sometimes an individual child will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom
- Questions do not have to be answered and can be addressed later
- This school believes that individual staff must use their skill and discretion in these situations and can refer to a senior member of staff if necessary

Dealing with questions

- Staff should establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting at the start of the session
- Staff should set the tone by speaking in a matter of fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way that does not encourage giggling or silliness
- Pupils should be encouraged to write down questions anonymously and post them into a question box, the staff will have time to prepare the answers to all questions before the next session and will choose not to respond to any questions that are inappropriate
- If a verbal question is too personal, staff should remind the pupils of the ground rules
- If a question is too explicit, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, staff should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later, on an individual basis
- Staff should not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child
- Pupils must not be given the impression that teenagers inevitably have sex, the view that sex should be between two people who are mature enough to make informed decisions should be emphasised
- If staff are concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy should be informed and the usual child protection procedures followed.

APPENDIX 3:

SCHOOL'S FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS/CARERS

Q: *What is the sanitary hygiene provision?*

A: We have sanitary bins in the girls' toilets in Years 5 and 6. Sanitary products are provided for them by the school. Please let us know if your daughter starts her periods before this so that we can make extra provision.

Q: *Should I keep my daughter at home because she has period pains?*

A: No, please send her into school with some pain relief. We will look after these for her during the day.

Q: *Should my daughter miss P.E. because of her period?*

A: No, she should take part in all activities in school so that she realises that periods are not debilitating and that she should carry on life as normal during her period.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS THAT CHILDREN MAY ASK AND MODEL/SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Children should receive an honest answer appropriate for the age of the child. Myths and misconceptions should be corrected.

Q: *Where does the baby come out?*

A: The baby comes out of the woman's vagina which is an opening in between a woman's legs. It gets bigger when the baby is ready to come out.

Q: *Does it hurt to have a baby?*

A: Yes, it does hurt but when the baby is born, most people forget the pain.

Q: *When will I start my periods?*

A: A girl usually starts her periods at the onset of puberty. This can be anytime from the age of nine onwards and it is different for everybody. Make sure you let me know if you think you have started your periods so I can help.

Q: *How will I know when my first period is going to start?*

A: You won't know beforehand, but when you go to the toilet you may find a small spot of blood on your pants. Make sure you let me know if you think you have started your periods so I can help.

Q: *What if I start at school?*

A: Go and speak to an adult you feel comfortable with and he/she will find a sanitary towel you can use.

Q: *How do you make a baby?*

A: When a female egg and a male seed are joined together, inside a woman's body.
(Key Stage 1)

Q: *What is a wet dream?*

A: When a boy is asleep, he may have an erection and some semen may come out of his penis.

Q: *What is oral sex?*

A: It is when a partner's mouth is used to stimulate the genitals.

Q: *What is a lesbian?*

A: A lesbian is a woman who is having a sexual relationship with another woman.

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Parent/carer FAQs for Hertfordshire Primary schools

Why is there new guidance on Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education from the Department of Education?

Before this development, the Department for Education's guidance to schools on Relationships and Sex Education was last updated in 2000, and it clearly no longer accurately reflects the world we live in.

The new guidance was finalised and passed into law by Parliament in 2019, with overwhelming support in both houses. It aims to create a curriculum that:

- fosters pupils' respect for themselves and others;
- promotes equality and values difference;
- educates pupils about positive relationships;
- helps pupils understand how their actions can impact on their health, wellbeing and safety.

It also aims to meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing identity and family circumstances, and to prepare them for life and work in modern Britain.

The Secretary of State stated in his Forward* to the guidance:

'These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.'

In a great many schools, this curriculum will be delivered through the school's existing Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education and will require very little change.

* Source: GOV UK | Statutory Guidance Forward by the Secretary of State

When will the new guidance on Relationships Education and Health Education be delivered in schools?

The guidance comes into effect from September 2020, when it will be statutory that:

- all primary schools in England teach Relationships Education
- all primary schools in England teach Health Education

Do faith schools have to teach Relationships Education?

Yes. The new legislation makes Relationships Education a compulsory requirement in all primary schools. This includes maintained schools, academies, special schools, free schools, and independent schools.

Faith schools recognise the importance of providing the best possible support to their pupils to prepare them for the challenges that life will bring. As one example, The Church of England welcomes the new legislation as it supports their faith vision:

“In Church of England schools, and in all schools, we want young people to flourish and to gain every opportunity to live fulfilled lives. For Church schools, RSE is about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, healthy relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.”

Will primary schools have to teach sex education? Isn't this too young?

Many primary schools currently teach sex education, and it is strongly recommended by the government that this continues. The decision about if and when to teach sex education (which goes beyond the content of the science curriculum) remains a decision that individual primary schools must make. Schools will outline what will be taught and when it will be delivered.

You can discuss this with the school to understand what they propose to teach and how.

What has changed from the previous requirements regarding the delivery of sex education?

The definition of what constitutes sex education in schools has been tightened. Schools that deliver sex education will ensure parents/carers know what will be taught as part of the Relationships Education and Health Education curriculum, and in which year groups. Schools will clarify what they teach as part of the sex education curriculum in science and what they teach as part of the RSE and Health curriculum in school policy.

Teaching about the changing adolescent body and puberty is not part of the sex education curriculum. It is part of the compulsory health curriculum.

Who will be delivering the sex education teaching?

This will usually be the class teacher. Visitors may also contribute to the curriculum, but schools will always ensure their messages and approaches are in line with the school values and policy.

Does the Department for Education's guidance state exactly what needs to be taught?

The guidance sets out the key learning that pupils must receive by the end of their primary education. Schools will decide exactly how they teach the curriculum and what resources they will use. Information about this should be in the school policy.

What are the key themes that will be taught in relationships education in primary school?

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

What values underpin Relationships Education?

The core values include:

- the importance of stable, loving relationships
- respect for all

- rights, responsibilities and the law
- equality
- acceptance of diversity
- kindness
- generosity
- honesty

What are the key themes that will be taught in Health Education?

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Will I be consulted before these subjects are taught?

Yes. Schools will engage and consult with parents/carers when developing and reviewing their policies for Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education. Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the opportunities when they are offered.

Schools may consult parents/carers in different ways, so you may be invited to a consultation meeting or to give your views through surveys, for example. There will be opportunities to find out the content that is in the curriculum, to see examples of materials the school will use and to ask questions and share any concerns.

Schools will listen to parent/carer views, but they must deliver the statutory curriculum content. Parent/carer consultation does not provide the power to veto curriculum content. Exactly how the curriculum is taught is ultimately a decision for the school.

Can I request my child be excused from Relationships Education?

No. Parents/carers will not be able to request that their child/ren be excused from any part of Relationships Education.

Can I request my child be excused from Health Education?

No. Parents will not be able to request that their child/ren be excused from Health Education. Health Education includes the teaching of the correct terminology for body parts and learning about the changing adolescent body in a timely way to ensure children are prepared for changes they will experience before they happen.

Can I request my child be excused from the Sex Education curriculum?

Yes. Parents/carers will be able to request that their child be excused from those parts of lessons that are defined as 'sex education' in the school's RSE policy. Parents/carers cannot request their child be excused from any sex education covered in the science curriculum.

Parents/carers should note that the science curriculum includes discussion about human reproduction. Discussion of sex within relationships education, therefore, provides

opportunities to set this learning in the context of meaningful relationships, personal values, health and safety.

It is hoped that when parents/carers have opportunities to find out more about what will be taught and how, very few parents/carers will want to do this. Parents/carers requesting to excuse their child from sex education will be invited to discuss their concerns with a member of staff and asked to specify which particular aspects of sex education content they wish to withdraw their child from.

Will excusing my child from sex education mean they will not learn about sex?

No. The school cannot guarantee that pupils will not learn about sex from other sources outside the classroom. There are many places that children can get information from including: parents/carers, peers, older siblings and the internet. The accuracy of the information they access will be variable.

The delivery of Sex Education within Relationships and Sex Education ensures that what pupils learn is age and developmentally appropriate, addresses their real questions and is based on important values and the law.

Can I request my child be excused from the elements of sex education taught through the science curriculum?

No. Parents/carers cannot request that their child/ren be excused from any part of the science curriculum, including lessons about reproduction and human development.

Can I request my child be excused from lessons about the changing adolescent body and puberty (including teaching about wet dreams and periods)?

No. Parents/carers cannot request that their child/ren be excused from elements of Health Education.

They can only request that their child/ren be excused from what the school defines as 'sex education' in their Relationships Education policy.

There have been protests in the news about the new curriculum being LGBT-inclusive. Can I request that my child be excused from lessons about LGBT people and relationships?

No. The purpose of the Relationships Education is to educate pupils, age appropriately, about relationships and diversity in the world they live in. It is important that pupils know that different families and individuals exist and are respected under the law.

LGBT-inclusive curriculum content is not new: it has been a requirement for all schools under the Equality Act 2010. The new Relationships Education curriculum reinforces this by clarifying that the lessons children receive in school must be inclusive of diverse families and be relevant to all pupils. The teaching must promote equality and respect, present material that is accurate and balanced, and it must be underpinned by legal rights and responsibilities. Content related to LGBT people will therefore be fully integrated into the curriculum, rather than being delivered in stand-alone lessons. Parents/carers will not be able to request that their child/ren be excused from this.

Will family diversity be represented?

Yes. Families, both in school and in the wider world, sometimes look different from a child's own family. Pupils will be taught that British society values diversity and that all families deserve respect. Families are characterised by love and care, even though this may be expressed through different traditions and values.

In schools, learning about families must be inclusive. The Relationships Education curriculum must allow every child the right to see their family represented and all pupils must be confident and safe to speak about who they live with and who cares for them.

What will my role as a parent/carer be in Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education teaching?

Will our family values be undermined by the curriculum in any way?

Parents/carers are partners with the school in this important area of education, helping to keep children safe and supporting them to thrive.

Schools will inform parents/carers about what is being taught across each year group, so that parents/carers can support the learning at home before or after lessons. This gives families the opportunity to talk about their own values, experiences and perspectives.

The government recognises in the guidance that:

'parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.'

Will schools teach about a range of relationships: marriage, civil partnerships, relationships outside of marriage and same sex relationships?

Yes. The curriculum enables children to understand the importance of a stable, secure and loving environment for family life and will include the range of different family types that can provide this.

Teaching will therefore represent the full range of committed and mutually supportive stable relationships in our society, including religious and civil marriages, civil partnerships, and relationships outside of formal commitment. The range of families represented will include stepfamilies, same-sex parents, grandparents as parents, adoptive families, and more.

When will this guidance be reviewed again by the DfE?

The guidance is set to be reviewed in 2022.

For more information, advice and training about the introduction of the new Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education curriculum, please contact the Herts for Learning Wellbeing team at wellbeing@hertsforlearning.co.uk or visit hertsforlearning.co.uk