

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

Secondary Schools Parent Guide



WARRINGTON
Borough Council

Presentation Aims

- What is RSE?
- Statutory guidance
- Curriculum content – Health Education & Relationships & Sex Education
- Why is RSE important?
- The right age to teach RSE
- Parents right to withdraw
- Parent & young people's views



What is RSE?

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.

It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.



What is RSE?

- We believe RSE is important for our students and our school.
- We aim to give our students the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
- RSE should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.
- It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure); as well as teaching what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.
- Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation.



Statutory Teaching

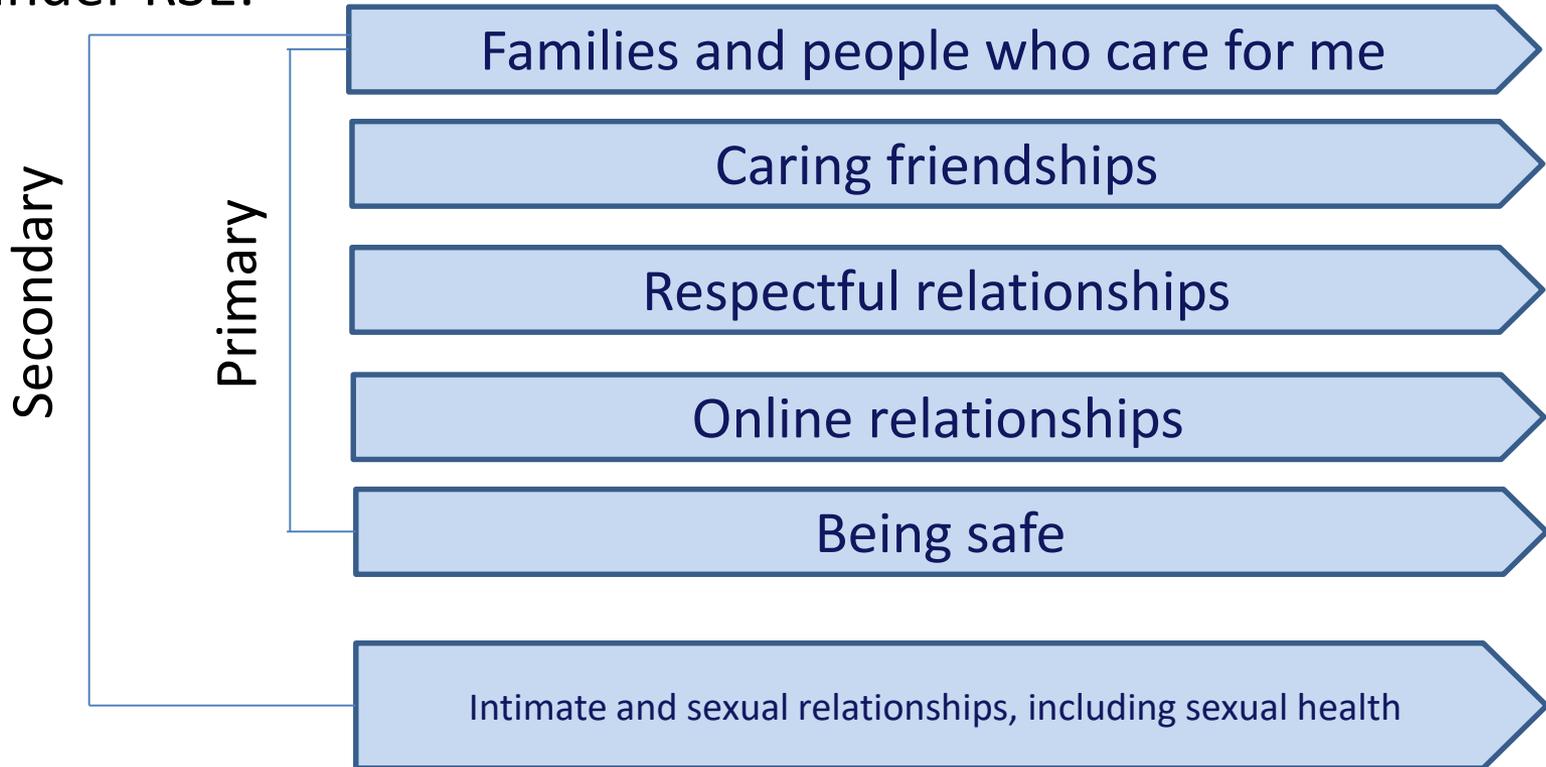
From September 2020, all secondary schools will be required to have health education and relationships and sex education (RSE) in place and a relationships and sex education policy.

Teaching about relationships and sex is nothing new for schools – RSE is covered through PSHE education, an established curriculum subject taught in the vast majority of schools. Nationally, there has been concerns about consistency of quality and time allocated to these important subjects.



Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)

The statutory guidance states the following should be taught under RSE:



Health Education

The statutory guidance states these areas should be taught under 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



Why is RSE important?

- Help reduce under 18 conceptions
- Reduces the risk/rates of STI's and promotes national screening programmes such as National Chlamydia Screening Programme
- Promotes consensual relationships
- Delays the age of first sex
- Makes pupils aware of abuse and how to report it



What is the right age to start teaching RSE?

- Children take in the information around them about sex and relationships from a very young age even if no-one talks to them about it. Many of the things they pick up are incorrect and confusing. For this reason it is important that parents and carers answer their children's questions to help them make sense of it all.
- Good quality RSE is taught through a spiral curriculum which develops with the child. RSE begins with teaching children about appropriate behaviour, safety and basic understanding of their bodies and how families care for them. Five year olds are not taught about how people have sex.

Parents right of withdrawal from Sep 2020

- Parents will **not** be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education.
- Parents **will be able** to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school) from any or all aspects of Sex Education, other than those which are part of the science curriculum, up to and until three terms before the age of 16.
- After that point, the guidance states that ‘if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.’
- Where pupils are withdrawn from sex education, schools should document the process and will have to ‘ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.’

Can parents withdraw their children from secondary school RSE?

Schools will continue to be required to publish policies on these subjects for parents, and statutory guidance will continue to set out that schools should consult parents on those policies to ensure they are feeding in their views.

Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to the schools head teacher if they have any concerns.

Full details of the new requirements are available in the new [Government RSE guidance](#) available from Gov.uk.



Do parents generally support RSE?

- Most parents are very supportive of schools providing relationships and sex education, and also want to play a part in educating their children at home
- 92% of parents support the teaching of PSHE education (which includes lessons about staying safe from abuse) in all schools (YouGov poll, PSHE Association, 2016)
- To fully meet the needs of young people there is a need for proactive support for parents and carers to have an active role in providing RSE at home, and improved and ongoing home-school RSE communication can make an important contribution to this.



View of young people

- Young people say that school is their preferred first choice for RSE, followed by their parents, but currently many parents are falling short in providing RSE at home.
- For boys, the main source of sex education while growing up is school (39%), followed by friends (24%), with fathers accounting for 3% and mothers 4%.



PSHE - Information handout for Parents

Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education at your child's secondary school: a guide for parents

We want all children to grow up healthy, happy, safe, and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain. That is why, from September 2020, all secondary age children will be taught Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

These subjects are designed to equip your child with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life. The world for all young people looks very different from the way it did 20 years ago when this curriculum was last updated – these changes bring the content into the 21st century, so that it is relevant for your child.

Your child's school will have flexibility to deliver the content in a way that is age and developmentally appropriate and sensitive to the needs and religious background of its pupils.

Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships and Sex Education will build on the teaching at primary. It aims to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds.

Your child's school will cover content on what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like and what makes a good friend, colleague and successful marriage or committed relationship. At the appropriate time, the focus will move to developing intimate relationships, to equip your child with knowledge they need to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.

Health Education

Health Education aims to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.



By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- families
- respectful relationships, including friendships
- online media
- being safe
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

You can find further details by searching 'relationships, sex and health education' on GOV.UK.

By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- 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

You can find further details by searching 'relationships, sex and health education' on GOV.UK.

Your rights as a parent

The important lessons you teach your child about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe, are respected and valued under this new curriculum. Teaching at school will complement and reinforce the lessons you teach your child as they grow up.

Your child's school is required to consult with you when developing and renewing their policies on Relationships, Sex and Health Education. These policies must be published online and be available to anybody free of charge.

You can express your opinion, and this will help your child's school decide how and when to cover the content of the statutory guidance. It may also help them decide whether to teach additional non-statutory content. Schools are required to ensure their teaching reflects the age and religious background of their pupils.

Some schools will start to teach these subjects from September 2019 – if you'd like to know more, please speak to your child's school about what they plan to teach.



Department for Education

If you want to know more about what will be taught as part of these new subjects, the best thing to do is speak to your child's school.



Right to withdraw your child

You cannot withdraw your child from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships and Sex Education, because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

If you do not want your child to take part in some or all of the Sex Education lessons delivered at secondary, you can ask that they are withdrawn. Your child's head teacher will consider this request and discuss it with you, and will grant this in all but exceptional circumstances, up until three school terms before your child turns 16. At this age, your child can choose to receive Sex Education if they would like to, and the school should arrange for your child to receive this teaching in one of those three terms (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

If your child's school is planning to teach these subjects from September 2019, your right to withdraw your child from Sex Education will be governed by the current legislation and so is absolute for the 2019/20 academic year – your child cannot opt in, and the head teacher will not overrule this request. This will remain the case until September 2020, when the new subjects will become compulsory and the new right to withdraw provisions will apply.

The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from.



Info for secondary parents



WARRINGTON
Borough Council

References

Department for Education – Statutory guidance

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

Sex Education Forum

<https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources>

PSHE Association

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/pshe-education-guide-parents>



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