

Relationships and Sex Education information for parents from September 2020



2019

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools from September 2020.

What is Relationship and Sex Education?

'Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.' (Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019)

Why is RSE needed?

- More than ever before, children are exposed to representations of sex and sexuality through the media/ social media and the social culture around them, so we need to present a balanced view of RSE and help them to be discerning and stay safe.
- Rates of sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) and teenage pregnancy in the UK are relatively high – as is the regret felt by young people after early sexual experiences.
- Research shows that most parents say they want the support of schools in providing RSE for their children.
- Research consistently shows that effective RSE delays first sexual experience and reduces risk-taking.
- Surveys of children and young people, as well as Ofsted, have repeatedly told us that RSE tends to be "too little, too late and too biological".

What are the aims of RSE?

There are four main aims for teaching RSE within the context of Primary School PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education):

- To enable young people to understand and respect their bodies, and be able to cope with the changes puberty brings, without fear or confusion
- To help young people develop positive and healthy relationships appropriate to their age, development etc. (respect for self and others)
- To support young people to have positive self-esteem and body image, and to understand the influences and pressures around them
- To empower them to be safe and safeguarded. Teaching about safety and relationships as part of PSHE contributes to how schools approach the safeguarding of pupils. It helps them to recognise when they and others are at risk and equips them with the skills, strategies and language they need to take appropriate action.

This is crucial to fulfilling statutory duties in relation to safeguarding pupils as well as to meeting Ofsted expectations.

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools.

The content set out covers everything that primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty. **The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main**

external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals.

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. **It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born. DFE 2019 SRE Guidance Primary**

At Covingham we teach

Year Group	Content Covered	Statutory Guidance
Year 1	to use the correct names for the main parts of the body, including external genitalia; and that parts of bodies covered with underwear are private.	Relationships Guidance 'how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe...how to report concerns or abuse and the vocabulary in which to do so' Y1 Statutory science curriculum - identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense
Y2	to use the correct names for the main parts of the body, including external genitalia; and that parts of bodies covered with underwear are private how to ask for and give/not give permission regarding physical contact and how to respond if physical contact makes them uncomfortable or unsafe	Relationships Guidance 'how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe...how to report concerns or abuse and the vocabulary in which to do so' Y2 Statutory Science Curriculum notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults Science Guidance They should also be introduced to the processes of reproduction and growth in animals. The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to understand how reproduction occurs.
Y3	that their body belongs to them and should not be hurt or touched without their permission; what to do and who to tell if they feel uncomfortable	Relationships Guidance 'how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe...how to report concerns or abuse and the vocabulary in which to do so' 'the importance of permission -seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults'
Y4	about puberty and how bodies change during puberty,	Physical Health and Wellbeing

	<p>including menstruation and menstrual wellbeing, erections and wet dreams.</p> <p>how puberty can affect emotions and feelings</p> <p>how personal hygiene routines change during puberty</p> <p>how to ask for advice and support about growing and changing and puberty</p>	<p>Guidance 2019 'key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes'</p>
Y5	<p>how to respond if a friendship is making them feel worried, unsafe or uncomfortable</p> <p>how to ask for help or advice and respond to pressure, inappropriate contact or concerns about personal safety</p>	<p>Relationships Guidance 'how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe...how to report concerns or abuse and the vocabulary in which to do so'</p> <p>Y5 Statutory Science Curriculum describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals</p> <p>describe the changes as humans develop to old age.</p> <p>Science Guidance Pupils should find out about different types of reproduction, including sexual and asexual reproduction in plants, and sexual reproduction in animals. Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty. Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.</p>
Y6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that FGM is illegal and goes against human rights; that they should tell someone immediately if they are worried for themselves or someone else. about the processes of reproduction and birth as part of the human life cycle; how babies are conceived and born (and that there are ways to prevent a baby being made); how babies need to be cared for. <p>Highlights in yellow are not covered by statutory guidance but suggested by The PSHE Association</p>	<p>Relationships Guidance 'how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe...how to report concerns or abuse and the vocabulary in which to do so'</p> <p>It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and</p>

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Teachers will inform you when they will be covering the objectives and may share with you resources that they will use. Where possible we will use Quality Assured materials such as the Medway Public Health Directorate RSE SOW. All teachers will take into account the needs of their classes in terms of Faith, SEND and family circumstances. They may also revisit objectives from a previous year group.

Can I withdraw my child?

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary or secondary as we believe the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught. Information from the Department for Education about the introduction of compulsory relationships education and RSE from September 2020. Published 5 April 2019 Last updated 5 November 2019

However, parents have the right to withdraw their children from teaching of Sex Education other than that covered in the science curriculum. Many of the objectives come under the statutory Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing or Relationships aspects of the PSHE curriculum and therefore are statutory.

Puberty is part of the Science Curriculum in Year 5 however the DFE guidance suggests that it is taught from age 9 so it is in the Year 4 PSHE curriculum for Covingham.

If you are considering taking your child out of SE lessons within PSHE, please consider the following:

- Other children in your child's class will have been taught this information and may well talk to your child about it, perhaps in the playground... and potentially mislead them or confuse them as a result. It may prove better to allow experienced and sensitive teaching staff to teach your child in a progressive, developmental way that is grounded in research.
- They will be learning about reproduction in Science lessons. The RSE in PSHE will echo this and will concentrate on teaching children how to enjoy healthy, appropriate relationships, improve self-esteem and self-confidence, and make healthy, informed choices. When viewed this way, it is hoped that RSE won't be seen as contentious or a cause for concern, but rather as helpful.
- Talk to your child's teacher, Mrs Polley, or Mrs Connell. We can explain the rationale behind what we are teaching.

How can I talk to my child about relationships, puberty and human reproduction?

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. 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.

What children learn at school is just part of the puzzle, and children can continue to learn from you at home. For some parents/carers, it can feel totally natural to discuss relationships, puberty and human reproduction with their child, while for others it can seem awkward and difficult. Either way, it is important to remember these key points:

- We all want children to feel safe and to be happy and healthy
- We need to normalise talking about relationships, puberty and human reproduction so taboos don't need to exist
- We might need to challenge our own ways of thinking, we have choices: we can avoid it or we can communicate openly and honestly with children.

Here are some tips for talking to your child:

- Be honest: if you don't know the answer to a question, be honest and say so. Tell your child that you will need to find out and that you will get back to them with more soon.
- Remember that children are curious and want to know and understand. We tend to place our adult perspective on children's questions and comments, allowing our brains to fill up with all the possible horrors that an innocent question could be about, when actually a child just wants (and needs) a very simple, matter-of-fact answer. This answer will not involve an 'adult' understanding of a topic – it needs to be at a child's level, with opportunity given for the child to be able to ask further questions if needed. Give yourself time to respond by asking something like, "What do you think that means?" or "Why do you ask?"
- Keep lines of communication open: having an open and honest relationship with your child can really help make conversations easier, so make sure that you are always willing to talk when your child needs you; if you can't, explain why and find another time when it is more mutually convenient.
- Use correct terminology: it helps that children aren't confused by hints, euphemisms and innuendo; use correct terminology whenever you can, especially for body parts. This is hugely important for safeguarding too.
- Bear in mind that children's lives today are very different from even a few years ago. Therefore, the education they receive needs to reflect this. We may feel that they know too much, when actually ignorance is the enemy of innocence: National and International research shows that 'young people who receive high quality RSE are more likely to delay the age of first sex. There is no evidence that RSE hastens the first experience of sex or increases teenage sexual activity' (The Sex Education Forum, hosted by National Children's Bureau. SRE - the evidence 1 January 2015) RSE ensures children are safer and empowers them to make their own healthy choices.
- Have a phrase for awkward moments, such as: 'That's a good question, and let's talk about it once we get home' (then make sure you do!).
- Always respond: if you don't, she or he may think it is wrong to talk to you about relationships, puberty or human reproduction and as a result you may find your child clams up when you raise the subject.
- If it all feels too personal, try talking about people in books, films and favourite television programmes.
- Listen rather than judge. Try asking them what they think.
- Enjoy it. Laugh with each other.