



# Relationship, Sex and Health Education Policy

## (RSHE)

### A STATUTORY DOCUMENT

Publish on Website?	<b>NO / YES</b>
Approved by Curriculum committee on:	Spring 2025
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This policy is linked to and should therefore be read in conjunction with:	PSHE, Science, RE, Equality Policy and Equality Statements, Child Protection, Confidentiality, Behaviour and Discipline and Anti-Bullying
Review in:	Spring 2027

## ***'Together We Grow'***

### **1. Introduction**

*The Governing Body believes that Relationship, Health and Sex Education is an essential and integral part of a balanced and broadly based curriculum and should be taught as an on-going theme throughout the primary school years. It is the shared responsibility of parents, teachers and governors.*

Our school's policy on Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is based on the Department of Education's statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) published in 2019. Within this document, it states that relationship and sex education should be the 'key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships focusing on family and friendships in all contexts, including online.' At Newport Primary School, we intend for our RSHE curriculum to: promote pupils' self-esteem and emotional health and wellbeing; help them build and maintain building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others in all areas of their lives; and stay safe both offline and online.

We believe that Relationship, Sex and Health Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. This is underpinned by our school rules:

- To be ready.
- To be safe.
- To be respectful.

Newport Primary School is a school that holds values central to all of its work and therefore this RSHE policy must be applied in line with the school's values system. This philosophy is essential to this RSHE policy and all named parties need to be guided by this principle when applying this policy.

Some aspects of Relationship, Sex and Health Education are taught as part of the Science curriculum and others are taught as part of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) throughout all age groups within our school.

### **2. Aims**

The aims of RSHE at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, including the importance of family for the care and support of children.

- Help children to understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships.
- To be able to recognise unsafe situations, protect themselves and ask for help and support.

Newport Primary School considers that RSHE is an integral part of the Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) Education curriculum. We aim to offer pupils a carefully planned programme on human development, relationships, sexuality and family life within a safe, comfortable atmosphere, and in a relaxed relationship between teacher and pupil. The programme is set within the statutory framework and is tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils. These aims complement those of the Science curriculum in KS1 and KS2.

### **3. Statutory requirements**

The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools meaning parents are unable to withdraw their child from this. Sex education is currently not compulsory, however, the Department for Education continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme that is adapted to the age and maturity of the pupils.

### **4. Definition**

RSHE teaches children about the different physical, social and emotional aspects of growing up, relationships and sexuality, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, consent, healthy lifestyles, diversity, and personal identity. It aims to provide pupils with the skills and knowledge they need to have safe, fulfilling relationships, take responsibility for their sexual health, and feel secure and happy in their sexuality. It also helps them to develop resilience and independence, and strengthens self-esteem.

RSHE helps to prepare children for changes like puberty and the transition into secondary school and adult life. In schools, it can serve to provide a secure environment where pupils can feel comfortable asking questions they might not want to ask elsewhere. Through RSHE, children can learn to better understand their needs, respect the needs of others, and improve their overall confidence.

RSHE topics start by teaching children about relationships, friendships, family and the different kinds of people who can support them. This is where children begin to learn about taking turns, treating others with kindness and respect, the importance of being honest and truthful, as well as the importance of personal privacy.

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

## 5. Curriculum

At Newport Primary School, our RSHE curriculum is embedded within our PSHE curriculum. We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age and needs of pupils, as well as considering the constantly changing world around them.

As set out in the statutory guidance, it is up to individual primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. We, like many other primary schools, already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so. As a result of this, year 6 pupils will receive stand-alone sex education sessions to teach them about how a baby is conceived and formed, as set out in the human life cycle unit in the National Curriculum for science. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, as is the case within all RSHE lessons, teachers will respond in an age appropriate manner so they are fully informed and aren't seeking responses to unanswered questions by turning to inappropriate sources of information online. In addition to this, whilst sex education is not currently compulsory in primary schools, it is natural for children to have questions about their changing bodies. Many of these biological aspects of RSHE are already taught within the National Curriculum for science, however, we want to ensure our lessons will provide a safe space for our children to ask questions and gain an age-appropriate understanding. Therefore, we may determine that additional content will be covered to ensure we are supporting the pupils' needs by guaranteeing that they are all prepared for both the physical and emotional changes of puberty, including menstruation.

Our RSHE curriculum has been developed in consultation with various stakeholders and takes into account the context of the school and its pupils. It teaches the 5 core topics of RSHE, which are:

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

And the statutory requirements within them, which include but aren't exclusive to:

- Healthy relationships.
- Consent.
- Gender.
- Online safety.
- Bodily changes.

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, please see appendix 1.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

## **6. Delivery of RSHE**

At Newport Primary School, we believe that Relationship, Sex and Health Education should provide children with a safe space to ask the questions they may have without shame or judgement. Evidence states that a graduated age appropriate spiral curriculum is the best way of preventing the topic of sex, reproduction and private body parts from becoming taboo and children from becoming embarrassed by the topic. In light of this evidence, RSHE will not be taught at set times throughout the year, and will instead be continually embedded in the curriculum throughout the school year. Parents will be informed of upcoming learning via the curriculum overview documents sent out at the start of a term. Class teachers may choose to share a message on ClassDojo following a lesson to make parents aware of what their children have learnt during the day and allow them to discuss topics further at home. The only exception to this will be the non-compulsory sex education sessions in year 6, for which parents will receive separate communication.

As part of RSHE, pupils will be taught about the nature and significance of strong and mutually supportive relationships for family life and bringing up children. These will include heterosexual or same-sex relationships. We ensure that we provide accurate information which helps to develop skills that allow them to understand differences and respect themselves and others. During this learning, no stigma is placed on children based on their home circumstances and it is taught with the hope of preventing and removing prejudice.

By the time they are in Upper Key Stage 2, we acknowledge that many children are beginning to experience puberty. We teach the children about the parts of the body and how they work. We also explain what will happen to their bodies during puberty, something that we believe should be taught before children experience it, for this reason we deliver puberty lessons to all children in years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care whilst making sure that children are fully informed. By the end of Key Stage 2, at Newport Primary School we will ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, and what menstruation is and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

We do not separate our classes into girls and boys for any part of the programme, including lessons around puberty. We maintain the belief that it is important for all children to learn about the opposite gender's bodies, changes and experiences. In keeping mixed groups together, children will learn to talk openly in front of each other without feeling emotions such as embarrassment, and it will allow them to foster a better understanding for the opposite gender, break down gender stereotypes and build positive relationships and respect for each other, regardless of gender. This means that all children are included without feeling vulnerable.

RSHE should contribute to promoting the moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and within society, thus preparing them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We will work towards this aim in partnership with parents and carers.

We believe it is important that RSHE is delivered by the class teacher as it highlights to the children that relationship and sex education is something we can all talk about. Furthermore, our class teachers know our children, meaning that they are more likely to be aware of any additional needs, support or particularly sensitive topics that may make a child in their class vulnerable due to some of the sensitive nature of the topic. This makes them ideally placed to deliver the material sensitively to all children in their class. However, 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 with children within the school setting.

We carry out the main RSHE curriculum in PSHE lessons, however we also teach RSHE through other subject areas, such as, Science, PE and RE, where we feel that it contributes significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of their own body, and how it is changing and developing. Within the National Curriculum for RE, 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. In the PE National Curriculum, children learn about healthy lifestyles and the importance of exercise.

## **Primary Science Curriculum**

*Early Years Foundation Stage children learn:*

- About life cycles
- Through ongoing personal, social and emotional development, they develop the skills to form relationships and think about relationships with others.

*In Key Stage 1 (Years 1 – 2) children learn:*

- To identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is to do with each sense
- To notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- To find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food and air)
- To describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene

*In Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6) children learn:*

- To identify that animals, including humans, need the right types and amount of nutrition, and that they cannot make their own food; they get nutrition from what they eat

- To identify that humans and some other animals have skeletons and muscles for support, protection and movement
- To describe the simple functions of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans
- To identify the different types of teeth in humans and their simple functions
- To describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- To describe the changes as humans develop to old age
- To identify and name the main parts of the human circulatory system, and describe the functions of the heart, blood vessels and blood
- To recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function
- To describe the way nutrients and water are transported within animals, including humans
- To recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 The Governing Body**

The Governing Body has approved this policy and the effectiveness of the policy is overseen by the Standards Committee.

### **7.2 The Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE (see section 7.5).

The headteacher also:

- Ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity
- Monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the policy

### **7.3 Staff**

All staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE.
- Monitoring progress.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE.
- Answering any questions that parents may have about the RSHE of their child; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons.

Class teachers are responsible for teaching RSHE at Newport Primary School. Teachers will reply to, and answer, children's questions sensitively and openly. They

will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the different faiths' views and avoid any negative impressions. Teachers will need to answer questions that may arise through the direct teaching of sex education, as well as those that may be asked at other times. All questions will be handled sensitively and set within a general context.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

Questions which teachers feel uncertain about answering should be discussed with a senior member of staff and answered at a later date. Consideration should be given to religious or cultural factors, and to parents' wishes before questions are answered.

#### **7.4 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE. When discussing issues related to RSHE they are expected to treat others with respect and sensitivity.

#### **7.5 Parents**

At Newport Primary School, the school is well aware that the statutory guidance recognises parents as the primary educators in RSHE. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

In promoting this objective we:

- Inform parents about the school's RSHE policy and practice.
- Recognise parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE. However, this rarely happens, as by working in partnership with parents, they recognise the benefits and importance of this aspect of their child's education.

We also see the value in books for approaching the subject of relationships, health and sex. To support parents, we have complied a list of books which contain clear, accurate and age appropriate information which will enable them to talk to their child about growing up and puberty, relationships, and sex. The school will also begin to purchase some of these books to create a library for parent and teacher use.

For this list, please see appendix 2 of this document and the RSHE page of the school website, where further useful resources for parents can be found.

### **8. Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE. These components will be taught in the Summer Term of Year 6 and can be seen in appendix 1.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher. Following receipt of this letter, the headteacher, along with relevant staff, will arrange a meeting with the parents and the child/ren to ensure that both (parents and child/ren) their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. They will also discuss the benefits of receiving sex education and the detrimental effects withdrawal can have on a child, with can include but aren't limited to:

- The social and emotional effects of exclusion.
- The likelihood of the child/ren hearing their peers' version of the lesson/s, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

Following this meeting, parents will then decide if they wish to continue with the withdrawal process. If they wish to proceed, unless there are exceptional circumstances, their request will be respected. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education and that child will go to another class for the duration of the lesson.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse or exploitation. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the designated person responsible for child protection/the headteacher as a matter of urgency. Disclosure of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police (either by the teacher to whom it is disclosed or by the DSL).

Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. We aim to ensure that pupils' best interests are maintained and try to encourage pupils to talk to their parents or carers to provide support. If confidentiality has to be broken, pupils are informed first and then supported by the designated teacher throughout the whole process.

## **10. Special Educational Needs**

Pupils with Special Educational Needs will be given the opportunity to fully participate in RSHE lessons, and a differentiated program will be provided where necessary, to ensure that all pupils gain a full understanding.

## **11. Equal Opportunities**

RSHE will be delivered to ensure quality of access for all pupils, regardless of gender, race, or disability, so giving equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination.

## **12. Complaints Procedure**

Any complaints or concerns about the Relationships, Health and Sex Education programme should be made to the class teacher in the first instance. Parents can choose to follow the Newport Primary School complaints procedure if they feel things are not resolved.

## **13. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the subject leader through, for example, planning scrutinies, learning walks and lesson observations.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the governors biannually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the staff, governing body and the parents or carers.

## **14. Further policies**

In conjunction with this policy, please also see:

- Behaviour policy and procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies
- Anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Mental health and wellbeing policy
- Online safety policy

Please see appendix 4 which provides answers to frequently asked questions. These can also be found on the RSHE page of the school website.

## Appendix 1: Statutory Learning

### By the end of primary school pupils should know:

Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability</li><li>The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives</li><li>That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care</li><li>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</li><li>That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong</li><li>How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed</li></ul>
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends</li><li>The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties</li><li>That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded</li><li>That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right</li><li>How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed</li></ul>
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs</li><li>Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li><li>The conventions of courtesy and manners</li><li>The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness</li><li>That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority</li><li>About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help</li><li>What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults</li> </ul>
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not</li> <li>• That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous</li> <li>• The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them</li> <li>• How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met</li> <li>• - How information and data is shared and used online</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)</li> <li>• About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe</li> <li>• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact</li> <li>• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know</li> <li>• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult</li> <li>• How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard</li> <li>• How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so</li> <li>• Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources</li> </ul>

**The table below shows how these topics are covered**

F&R = Families and relationships

S&CB = Safety and the changing body

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>
Same Sex Relationships	F&R Lesson 1: What is family? Families from pupils' own experiences. Same sex not specifically included if it is not raised by the children.	F&R Lesson 2: Families offer stability and love Introduction to different types of families. Same sex not specifically included but may arise as part of the discussion.	F&R Lesson 1: Healthy families Different types of family setups are introduced, including same sex parents.	F&R Lesson 6: Families in the wider world Different types of family setups around the world. Same sex not specifically included but could be part of the discussion.	F&R Lesson 3: Marriage Includes same sex marriage  F&R Lesson 5: Family life Different family set ups (including same sex parents) and dealing with problems.  S&CB Lesson 5: Emotional changes in puberty Attraction including to somebody of the same sex.	S&CB Lesson 6: Pregnancy and birth Touches on same sex couples having children.
Alcohol and Tobacco	S&CB Lesson 6: Safety with substances What is and isn't safe to go in or on the body - including medicines.	S&CB Lesson 8: Staying safe with medicines	S&CB Lesson 6: Making choices Independent choices.  S&CB Lesson 7: Influences Making choices and recognising influences.	S&CB Lesson 8: Tobacco The risks of smoking.	S&CB Lesson 7: Making decisions The influence others can have.	S&CB Lesson 1: Alcohol The risks of alcohol.
Menstruation					S&CB Lesson 4: Menstruation	S&CB Lesson 5: Conception Includes revision of

					The menstrual cycle and dealing with periods.	menstruation from Y5.
Puberty				S&CB Lesson 6 - Growing up Changes from birth to adulthood.  S&CB Lesson 7: Introducing puberty Physical changes during puberty.	S&CB Lesson 3: Puberty Physical changes  S&CB Lesson 5: Emotional changes in puberty Emotional changes	S&CB Lesson 4: Physical and emotional changes in puberty Changes that happen during puberty.
Conception and Pregnancy (Parents have a right to withdraw their child from all/ part of these lessons)						S&CB Lesson 5: Conception . Intercourse.  S&CB Lesson 6: Pregnancy and birth. How a baby develops.
Body Parts (vocabulary introduced)	S&CB Lesson 5: Appropriate contact Introducing acceptable and unacceptable touch.	S&CB Lesson 4: Appropriate contact: My body private parts Vulva, vagina penis, testicles.  S&CB Lesson 5: Appropriate contact: My private parts are private Safe and unsafe touches. Vulva, vagina penis, testicles.		S&CB Lesson 7: Introducing puberty Including: breasts, genitals, penis.	S&CB Lesson 3: Puberty Including: vagina, vulva, clitoris, penis, scrotum, testicle.	S&CB Lesson 4: Physical and emotional changes in puberty Internal and external reproductive parts.
Digital Safety			S&CB Lesson 3:	S&CB Lesson 1:	S&CB Lesson 1:	S&CB Lesson 3:

		<p>Be kind online Responsible digital citizenship.</p> <p>S&amp;CB Lesson 4: Cyberbullying Recognising unkind behaviour online.</p> <p>S&amp;CB Lesson 5: Fake emails Recognising when an email might be fake.</p>	<p>Internet safety - age restrictions Age restrictions related to social media and gaming.</p> <p>S&amp;CB Lesson 2: Share aware Benefits and risks of sharing information online.</p> <p>S&amp;CB Lesson 5: Consuming information online How information is ranked, selected and targeted.</p>	<p>Online friendships Issues related to online relationship -ps.</p> <p>S&amp;CB Lesson 2: Staying safe online How to stay safe online.</p>	<p>Social media Online relationships.</p>
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## **Appendix 2: Books to support the teaching of RSHE**

### ***Where Babies Come From***

- Mummy Laid an Egg - Babette Cole (Red Fox). A fun story where kids set their embarrassed parents straight on the facts of life through fantastic and funny illustrations.
- How Do You Make a Baby? - Anna Fiske (Gecko Press). A no-nonsense picture book that answers some of your kids' burning questions about where babies come from with playful comic illustrations.
- It's NOT the Stork! - Robie H. Harris (Candlewick). Notable for its use of comfortable language, It's NOT the Stork talks directly to its readers in a reassuring and straightforward way.
- Where Willy Went - Nicholas Allan (Red Fox). A unique, accessible and non-threatening story of a little sperm called Willy and his journey to find an egg.
- Let's Talk About the Birds and the Bees - Molly Potter (Featherstone). A fun and colourful book to help you start difficult conversations about sex and reproduction with young children.
- What Makes a Baby? - Cory Silverburg and Fiona Smyth (Silver Stories). This originally self-published picture book approaches the story of birth from a variety of perspective on how babies come into the world - from caesarian section to surrogacy and adoption.

### ***Bodies and Growing Up***

- Amazing You - Gail Saltz (Puffin Books). A brilliant picture book written especially for youngsters who're just becoming aware of their bodies, but still aren't ready to learn about sexual intercourse.
- What's Happening to Me? (Boys) - Alex Frith / What's Happening to Me? (Girls) - Susan Meredith (Usborne). This set from Usborne dedicates a book each to male and female growth and puberty, providing sensitive information on mood swings, hormones and physical changes for boys and girls. We recommend purchasing both genders so that children are aware of the changes in the opposite sex.
- Girl Talk - Lizzie Cox (QEB). A humorous, light-hearted guide for girls growing up by former teen magazine editor Lizzie Cox, Girl Talk covers a variety of practical and helpful advice on personal hygiene, bullying, and relationships.
- The Girls' Guide to Growing Up Great - Sophie Elkan, Laura Chaisty, and Maddy Podichetty (Green tree). The Girls' Guide to Growing Up Great approaches female puberty from the stance that knowledge is power, and is full of questions from real girls and the author's wise and kind responses.
- What's Happening to Tom?: A Book About Puberty for Boys and Young Men with Autism and Related Conditions - Kate E. Reynolds and Jonathon Powell (Jessica Kingsley). This story follows Tom as he begins to notice his body changing, and provides a wealth of advice for parents and carers of boys with ASC who are experiencing puberty.
- The Every Body Book - Rachel E. Simon and Noah Grigni (Jessica Kingsley). A wonderfully illustrated book on sex, gender and relationships that's inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

## ***Relationships and Consent***

- Respect: Consent, Boundaries and Being in Charge of YOU - Rachel Brian (Wren & Rook). This book, from the co-creator of the viral 'tea consent' video, provides a perfect introduction to the concept of consent for kids.
- My Body! What I Say Goes! - Jayneen Sanders (E2E). A child-friendly and age-appropriate picture book to empower and teach children about personal body safety, feelings, safe and unsafe touch, private parts, secrets and surprises, consent, and respectful relationships.
- Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect - Jayneen Sanders and Sarah Jennings (E2E). Sarah Jennings' wonderful illustrations perfectly accompany Sanders' thoughtful and child-friendly explanations of how kids can assert their right to have boundaries and protect their own and others' personal space.
- That's MY Willy - Alex Waldron (Ruby Tuesday). This book is also in the 'Fred and Woody' series, and focuses on male bodies and issues of consent.
- What's Down There? - Alex Waldron (Ruby Tuesday). Part of the 'Fred and Woody's Fantastic World' series, this fun story book provides a great way to initiate honest and realistic conversations about the bodies of women and girls.
- Do You Have a Secret? - Jennifer Moore-Mallinos (Barron's). All children have secrets, and while this can be a good thing, sometimes sharing can help them solve difficult problems. This book helps parents to teach their kids the difference between good and bad secrets, and how to relieve their anxieties.
- My Underpants RULE! - Rod Power and Kate Power (Kids Rule). This superhero-themed picture book helps to advise kids on recognising appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

## ***Diversity and Different Families***

- King and King - Linda De Haan and Stern Nijland (Tricycle). The subject of a smash hit stage adaptation, King and King tells the love story of two princes in a wonderful twist to fairytale norms.
- The Family Book - Todd Parr (Little, Brown Books). There are loads of different kinds of family, and The Family Book aims to celebrate them all. From adopted families to same-sex parents, this book is an ideal introduction for kids to all the different shapes that families can take.
- Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl? - Sarah Savage (Hachette). A beautifully illustrated book to help you start conversations with young children about gender diversity in a way that's fun and engaging.
- I Am Jazz - Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings (Dial Books). The story of a transgender child, based on the real-life experience of Jazz Jennings, who has become a spokesperson for transkids everywhere.
- And Tango Makes Three - Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson (Simon and Schuster). The heart-warming story of two penguin dads who are given an egg to raise by their zookeeper.

### ***For Parents and Carers***

- [Beyond Birds and Bees: Bringing Home a New Message to Our Kids About Sex, Love, and Equality](#) - Bonnie J. Rough (Seal Press). In this groundbreaking book, Bonnie J. Rough examines how the Dutch approach of normalising sex and bodies from a young age can revolutionise our approach to sex education.
- [The Sex Education Answer Book](#) - Cath Hakanson (Sex Ed Rescue). This essential book contains over 200 child-friendly answers to questions your kids might ask about sex, puberty, consent, and everything in between.
- [Sex and Sensibility: The Thinking Parent's Guide to Talking Sense About Sex](#) - Deborah M. Roffman (Perseus). In Sex and Sensibility, Debbie Roffman introduces five core developmental needs that are expressed through questions about sex, and how to meet these needs.
- [This is a Book for Parents of Gay Kids](#) - Danielle Owen-Reid and Kristin Russo (Chronicle Books). The go-to resource for parents who want to understand and communicate with their gay child, written in a handy Q&A format.
- [The Book You Wish Your Parents Had Read](#) - Philippa Perry (Penguin Life). In this Sunday Times bestseller, leading psychotherapist Philippa Perry provides indispensable, realistic tips for discussing the dos and don'ts of relationships with your kids.
- [Sex Positive Talks to Have With Kids](#) - Melissa Pintor Carnagey (Sex Positive Families). Renowned sexuality educator Melissa Carnagey walks you through more than 150 conversation starters to help you normalise talking about sex education with your kids.

**Appendix 3: Parent form: Withdrawal from Year 6 sex education within RSHE**

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS

Name of child	Class
Name of parent	Date
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within Relationships, Health and Sex Education	
Any other information you would like the school to consider	
Parent signature	

## **Appendix 4: Frequently asked questions**

**Q:** *Does the school have to consult with me before teaching RSHE?*

**A:** Schools are required to consult with parents when developing and reviewing their policies for Relationships Education in primary schools. This will inform the school's decisions on when and how certain content is covered.

Effective consultation gives the space and time for parents to input, ask questions, share concerns and for the school to decide the way forward. Schools will listen to parents' views, and then make a reasonable decision as to how they wish to proceed. What is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the school and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content.

A school's policies for these subjects must be published online and be free of charge to access. Schools should also ensure that, when they consult parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, for example the books they will use in lessons.

**Q:** *Will my child be taught sex education at primary school?*

**A:** Relationships Education has been introduced at primary level to put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds.

This starts in Key Stage 1 by exploring family and friends, how to treat each other with kindness, recognising the difference between online and offline friendships, asking for and giving permission (e.g. to borrow toys or touch someone's hair). Safeguarding through the curriculum also starts in Key Stage 1, with children learning how to name their body parts and understanding which are private and shouldn't be touched by someone else without their consent. This provides an important basis for supporting children to identify and report abuse.

In Key Stage 2, they are taught about puberty to prepare for the significant changes they will experience to their bodies and their emotions in the coming years. This includes biological information, and discussions on personal hygiene and menstruation (periods). Menstruation can start as young as 8 years old, with the average age being 12, so it is important to include this at primary level.

Some primary schools choose to teach sex education (which goes beyond the existing national curriculum for science) and, in those instances, parents can discuss this with the school to understand what this includes. Parents can withdraw their child from these lessons if they wish.

**Q:** *Do I have the right to withdraw my child from Relationships, Sex and Health Education?*

**A:** Parents have a right to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSHE which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16.

At this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should arrange for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education. The contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

Although parents have the right to withdraw, schools should do all they can to help parents understand the benefits of learning about relationships in structured lessons alongside their peers.

The evidence suggests that young people become naturally curious about sex and relationships in adolescence and will seek out information from often unreliable sources if they don't access it in school.

**Q: *At what age should I start talking to my child about consent?***

**A:** Talking to, and teaching, children and young people about consent should begin from a young age, starting with discussions about their body being their own and the fact they have the right to choose who can touch it.

This can be difficult at first, especially if they use their newfound understanding of consent to say 'no' to kisses from visiting family, or to refuse help to get them dressed or go to the toilet when they're younger.

However, that message about their body being their own is really important, and if they're confident that they can say 'no', and that everyone around them respects that, it helps them grow up expecting that others will do the same.

So, the short answer: there isn't a 'right' age, or an 'old enough', just start when it feels right for you and them. We don't need to frame it as 'talking about consent', or say to the child or young person, 'we're talking about consent now', we just need to offer them the reassurance that their choices, their space and their body are their own, that they're able to set boundaries when it comes to those things, and that no one will be upset or offended.

That can be especially important when we're talking about consent in a sexual context, because it's natural for someone to feel a bit sad or rejected if they're told 'no', even if they're a really secure person.

By showing them from a young age that their 'no' is respected even if someone else feels disappointed, it helps them to empathise if they're one day in the same situation. Communication – and communicating consent – is a lot about empathising with and understanding each other, so this is a good message to send out.

**Q: *Did the government listen to my views before introducing these subjects?***

**A:** A thorough engagement process, involving a public call for evidence and discussions with over 90 organisations as well as the public consultation on the draft regulations and guidance, informed the key decisions on RSHE.

The consultation received over 11,000 responses from teachers, schools, expert

organisations, young people and parents – these responses helped finalise the statutory guidance as well as the regulations that have been laid out in Parliament.

**Q:** *Will RSHE promote LGBT+ relationships?*

**A:** RSHE doesn't 'promote' anything; it educates.

Pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. These subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference and educate pupils about healthy relationships.

RSHE should meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity – this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships in the context of the law.

Pupils should receive teaching on LGBT+ relationships during their school years. At primary this could begin with teaching about different types of family, including those with same sex parents.

**Q:** *Does the new Relationship Education and RSHE curriculum take into account my faith?*

**A:** The government guidance is clear that schools must consider the religious background of all pupils when planning their Relationships Education and RSHE delivery so that topics are inclusive.

The subjects are designed to help young people from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain.

In developing the guidance, the Department for Education worked with several representative bodies and faith organisations, representing all the major faith groups in England.