

Summer Term: Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RSHE)

Department for Education (DfE) statutory requirements for Relationships and Health Education

From September 2020, it was made compulsory for schools to teach Relationships and Health Education. You can read about these changes in this DfE guide for parents here: [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education). The DfE additionally strongly encourages primary schools to deliver sex education to help prepare children for their transition to secondary school.

Most schools are already delivering very effective Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RSHE) and the guidance is simply about ensuring that **all** children get the information they need and want. The lessons will help children to learn about their bodies including the changes that take place at puberty, and will help keep them safe, so they can form healthy relationships (friendships) with others, now and in the future.

RSHE will be delivered next term, supported by a scheme of teaching resources from the leading children's health and wellbeing charity, Coram Life Education (CLE) to support us in meeting these legal requirements. More information about Coram Life Education and the SCARF scheme can be found on their website: [Coram Life Education](https://www.coramlifeeducation.org/)

There is very little in the SCARF programme that is non-statutory. We interpret sex education to mean puberty, conception, contraception, reproduction and birth. All of these themes, with the exception of conception and contraception, are statutory and included in either Health Education or National Curriculum Science.

Research shows that not delivering this vital education could put our children at greater risk of poor mental health. We know this because every year, around 25% of girls start their periods without learning about them at school. This can result in them agonising over why they are bleeding and how serious the cause might be. Similarly, 38% of boys experience wet dreams before having learnt about them, leaving them open to shame and stigma over a natural bodily function; this can lead to problems later in life. Current government Sex and Relationships Education guidance states that children should learn about puberty before they experience it - one of the reasons why making this subject statutory in all schools is so important.

We also know that RSHE has a protective factor when it comes to safeguarding children. 1 in 20 children are sexually abused and 1 in 3 of these do not report this to an adult. Sexual abuse can happen to any child; the best way to safeguard children is to ensure that they receive information on naming parts of their body, knowing the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch, and having the skills and confidence to find and talk to a trusted adult to report any abuse.

Research now shows that children with better health (including mental health) and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically. By learning about positive relationships, respect for themselves and others, and behaving appropriately and safely online, they will be better able to enjoy their friendships and therefore focus more at school.

There is sometimes concern that RSHE in school might promote sexual experimentation or cause confusion about an individual's sexuality. Research on quality Relationships, Health and Sex education in the UK (by the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles team) consistently shows that men and women who reported that lessons at school were their main source of information about sex were more likely to have started having sex at a later age than those for whom parents or other sources were their main source.

Content covered at each stage:

Year Group	Content
3	Introduces themes about change, including menstruation and bereavement, healthy and unhealthy relationships (friendships), how images in the media do not always reflect reality and the impact of this on people's thoughts and feelings; the nature and consequences of discrimination; the importance of protecting personal information online; understanding risk and building resilience; making informed choices; resisting pressure and recognising when and how to ask for help.
4	Builds on the themes covered in previous years, looking more closely at body changes as they approach and move through puberty including: menstruation and human reproduction; conflicting emotions; what positively and negatively affects their physical, mental and emotional health; understanding good and not-so-good feelings; recognising and challenging stereotypes; consequences of their actions; pressures to behave in an unacceptable, unhealthy or risky way and that marriage is a commitment freely entered into by both people.
5	Builds on the themes covered in previous years, looking more closely at body changes as they approach and move through puberty including: menstruation and human reproduction; conflicting emotions; what positively and negatively affects their physical, mental and emotional health; understanding good and not-so-good feelings; recognising and challenging stereotypes; consequences of their actions; pressures to behave in an unacceptable, unhealthy or risky way and that marriage is a commitment freely entered into by both people.
6	Builds on and reinforces all the themes of the previous years, with new content built into the lesson plans looking at: body image and the media; forced marriage; *sexual intercourse and IVF ; and managing pressure online.

***Sexual intercourse and IVF in Year 6: This session contains non-statutory sex education, as it teaches how babies are conceived through sexual intercourse and how this can be prevented through the use of condoms. If you wish to withdraw your child from this session, please contact the Head teacher.**

RSHE will take place within your child's regular, mixed-gendered class and your child will have the option to sit with a friend during the sessions. Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that children are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class.

Teachers will be careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of RSHE. Teachers have received training beforehand, and ground rules have been agreed to provide a common framework to teach within.

These ground rules are as follows:

1. Children will be given preparation, so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they may feel.
2. No one (adults or children) will be expected to answer a personal question.
3. No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
4. Only correct, scientific names for body parts will be used.
5. Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
6. Anonymous question boxes will be available for children to use in each class.

You and your child will have the opportunity to give us valuable feedback regarding the programme; we will be conducting some evaluations with the children following their sessions.

We recognise that parents play a vital part in their child's RSHE, and we encourage you to discuss these themes with your child at home in addition to learning in school. Please access the following link to find useful websites and books to support you in having these conversations at home: <https://www.coramlifeeducation.org.uk/rse-for-Y6-and-P7>