

Caroline Haslett Primary School

Frequently Asked Questions about Relationships and Sex Education

The Department for Education's announced changes to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) came into effect from September 2020. All schools are required to comply with the updated requirements, making Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education.

It had been 20 years since the last review of these curriculum areas, and in that time the world has changed significantly. Children now face new challenges. They have to process lots of information from different sources such as TV, the internet and social media. They need to understand how society is changing and understand risks they may face. This all puts pressure on their physical and mental health.

We believe relationships and sex education is important for our pupils and our school because:

- It is giving children the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships.
- It is about giving children the opportunity to put knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.
- It is the recognition that everyone faces difficult situations in their lives and how relationship and sex education can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context to both complement and reinforce what pupils learn at home about healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online, as well as how to be healthy.

Below, we have explained some of the common questions around these subjects.

Will my child be taught sex education at Primary School? Is this too young?

Sex education, that goes beyond the requirements of the science national curriculum, is not compulsory in primary school. However, compulsory relationships education has been introduced in primary schools to put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds. This will start with family and friends, how to treat each other with kindness, and recognising the difference between online and offline friendships.

At Caroline Haslett Primary School, we will be teaching sex education to all children following the Christopher Winter Project. Before any lessons [that go beyond the requirements of the science national curriculum.] take place, the school will give parents the opportunity to understand what will be taught and how it will be approached, and view any materials, so that you understand what we propose to teach and how.

If you continue to have concerns, you have the right for your child to be excused from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum.

We will continue to teach sex education which focuses on puberty and reproduction. This is only part of the Science National Curriculum for Y5 and Y6. As it is part of the science national curriculum, it is compulsory.

Is school the best place for discussions about Sex and Relationships?

We know from surveys of children, that if they do not get the correct and accurate information about sex and relationships from a reliable source, they will find the information from other sources (friends, older siblings, website, tv) which may not be true or age appropriate. The information gathered during the Government consultation found that most children wanted this information and discussion to be provided in school with their teachers, so that they could ask their questions in a safe space, and have them answered in an age-appropriate way.

Do I have a right to have my child excused from Relationships and Sex Education?

In a primary school, you have the right to have your child excused from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum. There is no right to have your child excused from relationships education at primary or secondary school as the contents of these subjects - such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) - are important for all children to be taught.

Has the government listened to the views of my community in introducing these subjects?

The Government undertook a wide public consultation which involved discussions with over 90 organisations, as well as the public consultation on the draft regulations and guidance. This has informed the key decisions on these subjects.

Will these subjects promote LGBTQ+ relationships?

No, these subjects don't 'promote' anything, they educate. We are teaching about equality. Our school ethos says that we are respectful of everyone. We value ourselves and all others: This means that if someone is black, they are welcome in our school; if someone uses a wheelchair, they are welcome in our school; if someone is gay, they are welcome in our school.

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. RSE 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. In our school the teaching of LGBTQ+ will be delivered through teaching about different types of

family, including those with same sex parents. All our planned learning will be taught in an age-appropriate way.

What are the topics covered in RSE?

In school, RSE topics will be taught within our Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. Our PSHE curriculum is split into three categories. RSE is part of the first two categories.

Relationships	Health and Mental Well-being	Wider World
Families and people who care for me Caring friendships Respectful friendships Online relationships Being safe	Mental well-being Internet safety and harm Physical health and fitness Healthy eating Drugs, alcohol and tobacco Health and prevention of ill health Basic first aid Changing adolescent body	Economic well-being Enterprise Careers

How will we know what is being taught so I can talk to my child about it at home?

The RSE Policy details the content of the whole-school RSE curriculum. Each half term, parents receive a newsletter, from their child's class teachers, that summarises the curriculum for that half term. If you need to discuss this further, teachers will be happy to discuss this with you, or signpost other resources that can be use at home to support discussions.

Will this work prompt my children to ask challenging questions?

Possibly. Your child or children trust you and will be likely to ask you questions to test your beliefs and opinions. Please don't avoid them - talk openly about diversity and equality.