



Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) – Parent Information Overview

February 2026

This overview aims to provide a clear, accessible overview of the statutory expectations for Relationships and Sex Education. Its purpose is to help parents understand what children must learn, how it is taught, and how families can support this.

What is RSE?

From **September 2020**, all primary schools in England are required to teach:

- **Relationships Education**
- **Health Education**

These are compulsory for all pupils.

Primary schools **may** also choose to teach additional **Sex Education**, but this is *non-statutory* and schools must consult parents before deciding what is included.

(Please note that the science curriculum—also compulsory—already includes teaching about human growth, reproduction and life cycles.)

1. Relationships Education (Statutory)

All primary schools **must** teach Relationships Education. This focuses on helping children develop:

- Healthy friendships and relationships
- Kindness, respect and empathy
- Understanding personal privacy and boundaries
- How to recognise safe and unsafe situations
- Families and the different ways they can look

The aim is to support children to form positive relationships and keep themselves safe.

2. Health Education (Statutory)

Children are also taught essential knowledge and skills linked to:

- Mental wellbeing (emotions, resilience, coping strategies)
- Physical health (exercise, healthy eating, sleep, hygiene)

- Basic first aid
- Online safety and safe use of digital devices
- Keeping safe in different contexts

This learning helps children stay physically and emotionally healthy.

3. Sex Education (Non-statutory in Primary Schools)

Primary schools can choose to teach additional content to help prepare children for changes during puberty or the transition to secondary school.

If a school includes **non-statutory Sex Education**, parents have the right to:

- **Be consulted** on what will be taught
- **Withdraw their child** from these lessons (except where content overlaps with the science curriculum, from which parents cannot withdraw)

Your school will clearly communicate which parts of the curriculum fall within statutory teaching and which are optional.

4. Why has RSE become statutory?

The government updated the curriculum to ensure children:

- Understand healthy relationships
- Are better prepared for the modern world, including life online
- Can recognise risks and know how to seek help
- Develop respect, equality and understanding of diversity

These updates reflect research and consultation with parents, schools and child-safety experts.

5. How will RSE be taught?

Schools are expected to:

- Deliver lessons in a **sensitive, inclusive and age-appropriate** way
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of families and communities
- Ensure teaching is consistent with the school's values and ethos
- Give parents clear information about what their children will learn

RSE is taught as part of the **PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)** curriculum.

6. Parental Rights and Involvement

Parents have the right to:

- Be informed about the curriculum

- Ask questions or seek clarification
- Withdraw their child from *non-statutory* Sex Education
- Receive support or resources to help manage conversations at home

Parents **cannot withdraw** children from Relationships Education, Health Education, or statutory science content.

7. How can parents support at home?

- Talk openly about friendships, feelings and keeping safe
- Encourage empathy, kindness and respect
- Discuss online safety regularly
- Model healthy communication
- Use books or videos recommended by school to guide conversations

Working in partnership helps ensure children feel supported, confident and prepared.

For further information, please see our [RSE policy](#). We are keen to work in partnership with you. If you have any questions or would like to share feedback about our RSE curriculum, please complete the [attached form](#).