

## **Relationships and Sex Education Parent Information**



The Department for Education is introducing compulsory Relationships Education for primary pupils and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for secondary pupils from September 2020. Also, from September 2020 it will be compulsory for all schools to teach Health Education.

### **Key Questions**

The Government have provided the following advice for some of the key questions parents have:

**Q:** Will my child's school have to engage with me before teaching these subjects?

**A:** Schools will be required to consult with parents when developing and reviewing their policies for Relationships Education and RSE, which will inform schools' decisions on when and how certain content is covered. Effective engagement 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. When and how content is taught 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 must be available to any individual free of charge. Schools should also ensure that, when they engage parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, for example the books they will use in lessons.

**Q:** Does the new Relationships Education and RSE curriculum take account of my faith?

**A:** The subjects are designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain.

In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that topics are appropriately handled. Schools with a religious character can build on the core required content by reflecting their beliefs in their teaching.

In developing these subjects, we have worked with a number of representative bodies and faith organisations, representing all the major faith groups in England. Several faith organisations produce teaching materials that schools can choose to use.

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

A: Parents will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements 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 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.

Q: Has the government listened to the views of my community in 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, has informed the key decisions on these subjects. The consultation received over 11,000 responses from teachers, schools, expert organisations, young people and parents – these responses have helped finalise the statutory guidance.

Q: Will my child be taught about LGBT relationships?

A: 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.

Pupils should receive teaching on LGBT content during their school years. Teaching children about the society that we live in and the different types of loving, healthy relationships that exist can be done in a way that respects everyone. Primary schools are strongly encouraged and enabled to cover LGBT content when teaching about different types of families.

Secondary schools should cover LGBT content in their RSE teaching. 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.

### **At Marshland High School**

Marshland High School already has an embedded programme of Relationships and Sex Education throughout Key Stage Three and Key Stage Four but as part of the process of ensuring we are 2020 compliant, would like to consult parents

regarding the changes. PSHE and Citizenship is currently known as 'Skills for Life' on the MHS Curriculum and is the area on the Curriculum where most of the RSE content will be covered, although it is complemented by other areas of the Curriculum.

The intent of all lessons within the School Curriculum is to provide a safe and inclusive environment where pupils feel engaged and able to explore topics. Pupils are encouraged to discuss the content and their responses to it, and questions are welcomed at all parts. As an inclusive classroom LGBT aspects are also explored, and many resources include neutral names to reflect relationship diversity (an example of this is attached). Pupils are advised on where they can seek further support with topics covered and given the tools needed to discuss topics effectively. Staff will address misconceptions factually and with appropriate language, they also will follow the Marshland High School Safeguarding Policy if information is shared which causes concern.

The Skills for Life Department follows a spiral curriculum model, where pupils can expect to revisit topics in different years with aspects and materials appropriate to that age point. In Year 7, for example, pupils have an overview lesson on general relationships which then focuses in on romantic relationships. In Year 9 pupils have a series of lessons which form the majority of their SRE content. These lessons look at healthy and unhealthy relationships, consent, the consequences of unsafe sex (pregnancy, STIs etc) and contraception. This is revisited in Year 10 when pupils review their learning and develop their understanding of unhealthy and coercive relationships.

At MHS Relationships and Sex Education is taught in a number of areas:

1. Through their regularly timetabled Skills for Life Lessons
2. Through the work of the Norfolk Police and their 'Safer Schools' initiative which discusses internet safety, healthy relationships, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and 'Murdered by my boyfriend' which furthers their understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
3. Through Super Learning Days (days off-timetable where pupils are given opportunities to focus on topics like Mental Health all day.
4. In other Curriculum Areas such as Science, IT/Computer Science, PE, Food Technology, Religious Education and Tutor time.

Topics to be covered:

The Government guidance advises that the following areas should be covered:

Area:	Where MHS will be covering:
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Families	Covered within Skills for Life and Religious Education
Respectful Relationships (including friendships)	Covered within Skills for Life, Safer Schools assemblies, Religious Education and Tutor Time
Online Media	Covered within Skills for Life and IT/Computer Science
Being Safe	Covered within Skills for Life
Intimate and Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health	Covered within Skills for Life
Mental Wellbeing	Covered within Skills for Life and on Super Learning Days
Internet Safety and Harms	Covered within Skills for Life, Safer Schools assemblies, and within IT/Computer Science
Physical Health and Fitness	Covered within Skills for Life and PE
Healthy Eating	Covered within Skills for Life and Food Technology
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	Covered within Skills for Life and Science
Health and Prevention	Covered within Skills for Life and Science
Basic First Aid	Covered within Super Learning Days
Changing Adolescent Body	Covered within Skills for Life and Science

For further guidance about what will be covered within these areas, please see pages 27 – 29 and 36 – 38 of the government advice (these pages are attached for reference)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/805781/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

Lessons are also complemented by the 'Explore PSHE KS3/KS4' and the 'Your Life 1-5' series of textbooks, although lessons are predominantly taught without textbooks. All lessons are fully resourced. If you would like to see a copy of any of these textbooks, or the resources used in lessons, please contact us.

If you have any further comments or questions regarding the government guidance or how Marshland High School intends to implement it, we would welcome your feedback.

Kind Regards

Miss L Beatty

Head of PSHE

[l.beatty@marshlandhigh.co.uk](mailto:l.beatty@marshlandhigh.co.uk)

Mr T Duce

Deputy Head responsible for Safeguarding

[t.duce@marshlandhigh.co.uk](mailto:t.duce@marshlandhigh.co.uk)