



Relationships, health and sex education

an introduction for parents to the
new curriculum requirements

September 2020 – Relationships and Health Education

As from September 2020 all primary school children will learn about relationships and health.

Relationships and Health Education is a new **compulsory** part of the school curriculum, which comprises two distinct areas:

- Relationships
- Physical health and mental wellbeing

Schools will have a lot of freedom to decide how to teach the new curriculum but must teach in a way that is:

- Appropriate for your child's age and development stage.
- Sensitive to the needs and religious backgrounds of the children in your child's school.



Why make changes to the curriculum now?

The current curriculum has not been updated for 20 years. So much change has happened since then.

Children need to learn what is relevant to them and the world they are growing up in.

The new Relationships and Health Education curriculum is designed to:

- Help all children grow up healthy, happy and safe.
- Give all children the knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships.
- Support all children to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain.
- Prepare all children for a successful adult lives.



Relationships

The Relationships part of the new curriculum will teach the children what they need to learn to build positive and safe relationships:

- With family.
- With friends.
- Online.

Your school will teach in a way that is appropriate to your child's age and will look at these questions:

- What is a relationship?
- What is friendship?
- What is family?
- Who can your child look to for support?



Relationships

What will my child have been taught by the end of primary school?

By the time your child finishes primary school, they will have been taught about the following in Relationships Education:

- Family and people who care for them.
- Caring friendships.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online relationships.
- Being safe.



Physical health and mental wellbeing

The physical health and mental wellbeing part of the new curriculum will teach the children how to:

- Make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.
- Recognise issues in themselves.
- Recognise issues in others.
- Seek support as early as possible when issues arise.



Physical health and mental wellbeing

What will my child have been taught by the end of primary school?

By the time your child finishes primary school, they will have been taught about the following in Physical health and mental wellbeing:

- Mental wellbeing.
- Internet safety and harms.
- Physical health and fitness.
- Healthy eating.
- Facts about drugs, alcohol and drugs and the risks associated with them.
- Health and prevention of illness.
- Basic first aid.
- Changes to the adolescent body.



I want to know more...

If you want to know more about what will be taught as part of the new Relationships and Health Education curriculum, the best thing to do is speak to us as your child's school.

You can also look online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>

Some schools may have already started to teach Relationships and Health Education from September 2019. You can check with your child's school to find out what is happening.



Schools complement and reinforce what parents teach

As a parent, **you** teach **your child** important lessons about:

- Healthy relationships.
- How to look after themselves.
- Staying safe.

The new curriculum respects and values what you teach your child.

What your child's school teaches will complement and reinforce what you teach. To make sure this happens...



Obligations on schools

- **We, as your child's school, must** teach in a way that reflects the age and religious background of the pupils.
- **We must** consult you as a parent when developing and renewing their policies on Relationships and Health Education.
- **We must** publish our policies on Relationships and Health Education online, and make them available to you free of charge.

You can express your opinions as a parent. Your opinions will help your child's school decide:

- **How and when** to cover the compulsory content.
- **Whether** to teach **additional** non-compulsory content.



Can I withdraw my child from the new Relationships and Health curriculum?

You **cannot** withdraw your child from any part of the Relationships and Health Education curriculum.

It is important for ALL children to be taught the content on such essential matters like friendships and keeping safe.

There are separate rules on withdrawing a child from Sex Education.



Can I withdraw my child from Sex Education?

Sex education is separate from the Relationships and Health curriculum.

You **can** withdraw your child from some or all of the lessons on Sex Education. The head teacher must grant your request to withdraw your child.

But before making a request, please:

- Ask your child's school about what will be taught in Sex Education, and when.
- Remember that the science curriculum in all maintained schools includes content on human development, which includes human reproduction. There is no right for a parent to withdraw their child from the science curriculum.

