

Relationships and Sex Education Q&A

What is the new RSE curriculum?

In September 2020 the Department for Education introduced compulsory Relationships Education and Health education for primary pupils. The RSE curriculum is designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain. All pupils have a right to an education which enables them to flourish and is set in a learning community where differences of lifestyle and opinion (within that which is permissible under UK law) are treated with dignity and respect.

How is RSE delivered?

In line with national recommendations, RSE at Bounds Green is delivered through PSHE, and Science Curriculum. RSE is taught to each year group, starting in EYS. Teachers will use a range of teaching methods and age-appropriate resources to deliver RSE/PSHE that best meets the intended learning outcomes for each year group. Each year group's cohort varies, so teachers will use their knowledge of the class and their professional expertise to select resources and activities that are most suitable.

What are the topics covered in RSE?

As part of our Relationships Education programme of study, children will be taught what a relationship is; the different types of relationships they might have e.g. with family members, friends, and other adults; the importance of healthy and secure relationships to wellbeing; what constitutes a healthy relationship, in person and online; how to set and observe appropriate boundaries in relationships; how to recognise when a situation is unsafe; strategies for dealing with situations that they find uncomfortable or that are unsafe; and sources of help and advice.

A summary of the key objectives of the statutory Relationships Education curriculum is set out below:

Families and people who care for me

Children should know:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
 - the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
 - that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
 - that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

Pupils should know:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

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

The RSE curriculum is designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain. We believe that teaching about Relationships builds on the morals and values of our school.

My religion says that gay is wrong, so why are you teaching about different sexuality choices?

We are teaching about equality. We understand and respect all faiths. We recognise the tension that it can present. We are teaching children not to be afraid of difference but to celebrate difference. Any discussion or resources used will be to help your child be respectful and tolerant towards others. We are preparing the children for life in Britain. Britain is diverse and they are going to meet people who are different to them as they grow up.

You are confusing my child because at home they are learning that being gay is wrong but at school you are telling them that being gay is OK.

As a parent it is your right to talk to your child about religious beliefs. In school we build our curriculum around UK law. We are teaching children that all people and relationships are equal. We are teaching children that all families are different and your child as they grow up are going to meet people who live in different families. It is important that children learn about people who are different. They need to learn to be tolerant and respectful of people with different views. When they grow up they can make up their own minds about what is right and wrong.

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 LGBT 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 identity – this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships in the context of the law. In our school the teaching of LGBT 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.

Are primary children too young to be taught about gay or lesbian people?

Some children grow up in families with gay or lesbian people. We want all of our children to know that their family is normal and accepted in school. Our children will interact with people from different backgrounds and we want them to treat all members of the community with the same respect.

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

Although sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, we believe children should understand the facts about human reproduction before they leave primary school. We therefore provide some non-statutory sex education, covering how human reproduction and conception occurs. At Bounds Green Primary School we currently teach sex education to children in Year 5 and 6 (which goes beyond the existing national curriculum for science). Before these lessons take place, the school gives parents the opportunity to understand what will be taught and how it will be approached, and view any materials so that they understand what we propose to teach and how.

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

Parents will be given opportunities to attend different meetings to understand how the curriculum is being planned to be taught. As the curriculum planning develops parents will have the opportunity to look at materials that will be used. At the beginning of each year there will be an opportunity to discuss with the class teacher the years curriculum. Each term parents will have access via the school website and the curriculum newsletter will summarise what is being taught. 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 so please don't avoid these types of conversations. Be honest with them about your beliefs and opinions, talk openly about diversity and equality.

Year Group	Topic
1	Body parts
2	Looking after the body Differences between girls & boys Naming body parts
3	Differences between males & females Safe places to play and safe people to be with
4	Growing & Changing, Body parts and reproduction, puberty
5	Different types of relationships, Becoming man/woman, Puberty and Hygiene
6	Puberty and Change, Relationships and Reproduction, Conception and Pregnancy, Safe people to be with Menstruation, wet dreams

(Based on the Christopher Winter Project Programme)

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

You have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum (Years 5 and 6). The Government has decided there is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety and through technologies such as mobile phones) – are important for all children to be taught.

We will inform parents of the right to withdraw by letter in advance of non-statutory sex education lessons being taught. Parents and carers who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education should talk with the class teacher, the PSHE coordinator or the head teacher who will explore any concerns and discuss resources being used.