



5 September 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

As a part of your child's education at The Brittons Academy, we promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme. PSHE is the curriculum subject that gives children the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, healthy, productive lives and meet their full potential.

As part of this course, students will be completing units in Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) covering topics such as puberty, body image, relationships and communication skills, keeping yourself safe online, contraception and sexual health. Pupils will also have opportunities to ask questions which will be answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. Each pupil's privacy will be respected, and no one will be asked to reveal personal information. PSHE is taught throughout the school in every year group and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team and governing body.

Please visit the Empower Learning Academy Trust's website: <https://www.elatschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/ELAT-Policy-Relationships-and-Sex-Education.pdf> for more detail about our RSE curriculum. All PSHE teaching will take place in a safe learning environment and is underpinned by our school ethos and values. Some parts of RSE are compulsory - these are part of the National Curriculum for Science and cover factual biological information about the human body and sexual reproduction. Parents are not able to withdraw students from these lessons. Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from other parts of RSE if they wish to do so. However, we believe that the increasing presence of sexual images and content in social and other media make it important that all young people have a place to discuss pressures, check facts and dispel myths. Even if a child is withdrawn, many pupils will discuss such issues with each other outside the classroom – so, rather than hear about the content second-hand, we hope all children will have the opportunity to take part in our carefully planned lessons. If you do wish to withdraw your child from RSE lessons, please complete and return the form on page 20 of the policy mentioned above.

As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents. Recent parental feedback has indicated that the overwhelming majority of parents continue to be highly supportive of our relationships and sex education programme. You may find that your child starts asking questions about the topic at home, or you might want to take the opportunity to talk to your child about issues before the work is covered in school. Please read the attached factsheet for further information, or the frequently asked questions produced by the Department for Education below. If you have any queries



about the content of the programme or resources used, please do not hesitate in contacting me at school. All materials used are available for you to browse through should you so wish.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Foley', written in a cursive style.

**Ms J Foley**

Personal Development Lead

# Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education: FAQs

Information from the Department for Education about the introduction of compulsory relationships education and RSE from September 2020.

From:

[Department for Education](#)

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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.

Through these subjects, we want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe – we want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive

contribution to society. Throughout our engagement process as we developed this curriculum, we have heard a number of wide ranging concerns.

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

Q: Will my child's school still have to teach these subjects from September despite the recent disruption?

A: The subjects will be compulsory from September 2020. Schools that have met the requirements set out in the statutory guidance, for example engaging parents and carers, are encouraged to begin teaching the new curriculum from September 2020. Schools that are not ready to teach the subjects, or are unable to meet the requirements because of the challenging circumstances, should aim to start preparations as soon as possible and begin teaching the new curriculum by at least the start of the summer term 2021.

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.

For more information download our advice for primary schools on [engaging parents on Relationships Education](#).

Q: Will my child be taught sex education at primary? This is too young.

A: We are not introducing compulsory sex education at primary school.

We are introducing Relationships Education at primary, 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.

Many primary schools choose to teach sex education (which goes beyond the existing national curriculum for science), and we recommend that they do so, tailored to the age, physical and emotional maturity of their pupils. In those instances we recommend you discuss this with the school, to understand what they propose to teach and how. If you continue to have concerns, you have an automatic right to withdraw your child from these sex education 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.

Q: What support will schools receive to deliver these subjects well?

A: We are investing in a central support package to help teachers introduce these subjects well and with confidence. This will include a new online service, featuring access to high quality resources, innovative training materials, case studies and an implementation guide, available from Spring 2020.

There will also be training available for teachers through existing regional networks, offering opportunities to improve subject knowledge and build confidence.

We're working with expert organisations, schools and teachers to develop this support.

Q: Where can I find out more information about what will be taught in my child's school?

A: If you want to know more about what will be taught as part of the new subjects, the best thing to do is speak to your child's school. We have also published [parent guides](#), which explain what the subjects are, and parents' rights.

These subjects are designed to equip your child with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life. The important lessons you teach your child about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe, are respected and valued under this new curriculum.

Teaching at school will complement and reinforce the lessons you teach your child as they grow up. Your child's school will have flexibility to deliver the content in a way that is age and developmentally appropriate and sensitive to the needs and religious background of its pupils.

