

I've heard that I can take my child out of PSHE lessons on SRE. Is this true?

Yes, it is.

Parents/carers have the legal right to withdraw their children from the SRE included in the PSHE Education curriculum (as that is a non-statutory subject). But they are not permitted to withdraw their child from the Sex Education included in the National Curriculum Science Orders, as Science is a statutory subject.

If you are considering taking your child out of SRE lessons within PSHE Education, please consider the following:

- All the other children in your child's class will have been taught this information and may well talk to your child about it, perhaps in the playground... and potentially mislead them or confuse them as a result. It may prove far better to allow experienced and sensitive teaching staff to teach your child in a progressive, developmental way that is grounded in research.
- They will be learning about reproduction in Science lessons. The SRE in PSHE Education will echo this and will concentrate on building self-esteem and teaching children how to enjoy healthy, appropriate relationships, improve self-esteem and self-confidence, and make healthy, informed choices. When viewed this way, it is hoped that SRE won't be seen as contentious or a cause for concern, but rather as helpful.
- Talk to your child's teacher, the head teacher, or the teacher in charge of PSHE Education. Often, when parents and carers find out what is in the PSHE Education curriculum, their fears are allayed as they can appreciate it is in the best interests of their child's lifelong learning.

Please note: at no point will a child be taught something that is inappropriate.

However, it is important to note that puberty, the changing adolescent body, physical and emotional changes and menstrual wellbeing, including the key facts about the menstrual cycle, is taught as a **statutory requirement** of Health Education. Parents **DO NOT** have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons.



A Guide for Parents and Carers on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education



Why is this RSHE curriculum needed?

There are four main aims for teaching RSE within the context of Primary School PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education):

- More than ever before, children are exposed to representations of sex and sexuality through the social culture around them. The unregulated content on the internet or social media, can mean children may be exposed to dangerous, confusing or scary content. We can prepare them for this by presenting a balanced view of positive healthy relationships to help them to be discerning and to stay safe.
- There is much independent research showing most parents and carers value the support of schools in providing Relationship and Sex Education for their children. Parents and schools want children to be safe and happy.
- A range of independent research consistently shows that effective Relationship Education delays first sexual experience and reduces risk-taking in young people.
- Surveys of children and young people, as well as Ofsted, have repeatedly said that Relationship and Sex Education tends to be “too little, too late and too biological”. This is one of the many reasons why the Department for Education is making Relationships and Health Education compulsory in primary
- Answer questions and don't be afraid to say, 'I really don't know - let's work it out or look it up together'. Have a phrase for awkward moments, such as, 'That's a good question, and let's talk about it once we get home'.
- Always respond. If you don't, they may think it is wrong to talk to you about relationships, puberty or human reproduction and as a result you may find your child clams up when you want to raise the subject, now or in the future.
- If it all feels too personal, try talking about people in books, films and favourite television programmes.
- Enjoy it. Laugh with each other!
- Work in partnership with the school.

What exactly is Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education ?

The Government states:

'To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their well-being, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.'

From September 2020, Relationships and Health Education are compulsory in all primary schools in England. The DfE guidance clearly states the statutory requirements, i.e. what children **MUST** be taught by the end of primary school. Health Education includes learning about 'the changing adolescent body' to equip children to understand and cope with puberty.



Here are some tips for talking to your child:

- Be honest. If you don't know the answer to a question, be honest and say so. Tell your child that you will need to find out and that you will get back to them with more soon.
- Remember that children are curious and want to know and understand. We tend to place our adult perspective on children's questions and comments, when actually a child just wants (and needs) a very simple, age-appropriate, matter-of-fact answer. This answer will not involve an 'adult' understanding of a topic - it needs to be at a child's level, with opportunity given for the child to be able to ask further questions if needed. Give yourself time to respond by asking something like, "What do you think that means?" or "Why do you ask?"
- Keep lines of communication open. Having an open and honest relationship with your child can really help make conversations easier, so make sure that you are always willing to talk when your child needs you; if you can't, explain why and find another time when it is more mutually convenient.
- Use correct terminology. It helps that children aren't confused by hints, euphemisms and innuendo; use correct terminology whenever you can, especially for body parts. This is hugely important for safeguarding too
- Respond to what children say they need. Bear in mind that children's lives today are very different from even five years ago. Therefore, the education they receive needs to reflect this. Research shows us that children want and need to understand relationships, puberty and human reproduction, and want to be able to talk with parents/carers about this when they have had lessons at school. We may feel that they know too much, when actually ignorance is the enemy of innocence.

What will my child actually be taught about puberty and human reproduction?

Jigsaw's 'Changing Me' unit is taught over a period of 6 weeks, usually in the second half of the summer term. Each year group will be taught appropriate to their age and developmental stage, building on the previous years' learning. Please note: at no point will a child be taught something that is inappropriate; and if a question from a child arises and the teacher feels it would be inappropriate to answer, (for example, because of its mature or explicit nature), the child will be encouraged to ask his/her parents or carers at home. The question will not be answered to the child or class if it is outside the remit of that year group's programme.

The Changing Me Puzzle is all about coping positively with change and includes:

Ages 3-5	Growing up: how we have changed since we were babies.
Ages 5-6	Boys' and girls' bodies; correct names for body parts.
Ages 6-7	Boys' and girls' bodies; body parts and respecting privacy (which
Ages 7-8	How babies grow and how boys' and girls' bodies change as they grow older. Introduction to puberty and menstruation.
Ages 8-9	Internal and external reproductive body parts. Recap about pu-
Ages 9-10	Puberty for boys and girls in more detail including the social and emotional aspects of becoming an adolescent. Conception ex-
Ages 10-11	Puberty for boys and girls revisited. Understanding conception to

All lessons are taught using correct terminology, child-friendly language and diagrams.

