



Relationships & Sex Education

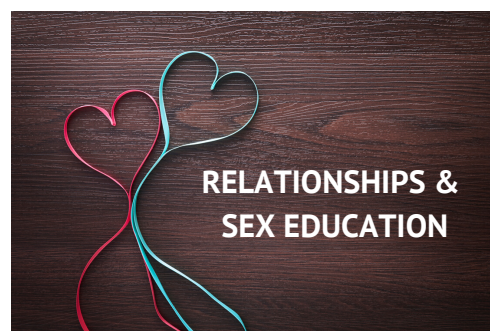
RSE DAY

Celebrating relationships & sex education

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)

Relationships and sex education (previously known as SRE- sex and relationships education) has been part of the school curriculum in England for over thirty years. In September 2020 a new relationships and sex education curriculum will become statutory in England. At Highlands School we are committed to the importance of inclusive RSE in the curriculum and we welcome the positive changes that the new curriculum will bring. This week's special feature newsletter on RSE has the following aims:

- 1 To ensure that there is a shared understanding of the purpose of relationships and sex education.
- 2 To inform parents/carers and students about the purpose of RSE Day.
- 3 To inform parents/carers and students about national changes to the RSE curriculum and how Highlands School is preparing to implement these changes.
- 4 To provide tips and guidance to support parents/carers in discussing the topic of relationships with their children.



The contents of pages 1-2 of this newsletter have been taken from the Sex Education Forum. Established in 1987, the Sex Education Forum is a group of partners working together to achieve quality relationships and sex education (RSE) for all children and young people. You can find more information on their website [HERE](#).



RELATIONSHIPS

WHAT IS RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION?

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing.

According to the sex education forum, good quality RSE is an entitlement for all children and young people and must:

- ▶ Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, in order to make informed choices. In schools this should be part of compulsory curriculum provision.
- ▶ Be positively inclusive in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion, belief or other life-experiences, particularly HIV status and pregnancy.
- ▶ Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe relationships and ensure good communication about these issues.
- ▶ Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for reflection in order to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care.
- ▶ Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner.
- ▶ Ensure children and young people are clearly informed of their rights such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding.
- ▶ Be relevant and meet the needs of children and young people, and actively involve them as participants, advocates and evaluators in developing good quality provision.
- ▶ Be delivered by competent and confident educators.
- ▶ Be provided within a learning environment which is safe for the children, young people and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.





RSE DAY

RSE Day is on 25 June 2020. It is an annual celebration of excellent RSE that educates children and young people about healthy relationships and positive sexual health. The overall aim of RSE Day is to improve the quality of relationships and sex education provided for children and young people by celebrating good practice. Good quality RSE needs to happen all year round, with a planned curriculum, but 25 June 2020 is also an opportunity to start new conversations about the importance of RSE. RSE Day encourages schools and the wider community to get involved. It asks everyone to consider their role in promoting healthy relationships and positive sexual health - whether that's as a parent/carer, an educator, a faith leader, a councillor, a health practitioner, a friend or family member.



WHAT ARE THE KEY PRINCIPLES THAT RSE PROMOTES?

- ➡ RSE helps keep children safe – this is based on evidence.
- ➡ RSE lessons should be enjoyable and useful/relevant.
- ➡ RSE happens in school and at home.
- ➡ RSE involves communication between people.
- ➡ RSE involves people of different ages and starts young to support life-long learning.



NATIONAL CHANGES TO THE RSE CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS

From September 2020 all secondary schools will be required to deliver a new statutory RSE curriculum, and all primary schools will be required to deliver relationships education. The government has also committed to statutory health education, meaning the majority of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education will be compulsory from 2020.

At Highlands School we welcome the new statutory curriculum because we believe it will;

- support the school's DARE values,
- support the school in delivering a holistically world-class education to all students,
- support all schools in delivering a rigorous and high-quality RSE and PSHE curriculum,
- ensure that RSE is taught in an inclusive way in accordance with the 2010 Equality Act,
- support the school in celebrating diversity and in challenging homophobia, bi-phobia and transphobia,
- support the school in teaching topics that are relevant to the lives of young people today.



The information on the next two pages has been produced by the Department for Education to support parents and carers in understanding the changes in the new RSE curriculum. The full guidance document for the new statutory curriculum can be found [HERE](#) for parents/carers who wish to read it.



Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education at your child's secondary school: a guide for parents

We want all children to grow up healthy, happy, safe, and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain. That is why, from September 2020, all secondary age children will be taught Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

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 world for all young people looks very different from the way it did 20 years ago when this curriculum was last updated – these changes bring the content into the 21st century, so that it is relevant for your child.

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.

Relationships and sex education

Relationships and Sex Education will build on the teaching at primary. It aims to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds.

Your child's school will cover content on what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like and what makes a good friend, colleague and successful marriage or committed relationship. At the appropriate time, the focus will move to developing intimate relationships, to equip your child with knowledge they need to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.

By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- families
- respectful relationships, including friendships
- online media
- being safe
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

You can find further details by searching '**relationships, sex and health education**' on GOV.UK.

Health Education aims to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.



By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- mental wellbeing
- internet safety and harms
- physical health and fitness
- healthy eating
- drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- health and prevention
- basic first aid
- changing adolescent body

You can find further details by searching '**relationships, sex and health education**' on GOV.UK.



Your rights as a parent

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 is required to consult with you when developing and renewing their policies on Relationships, Sex and Health Education. These policies must be published online and be available to anybody free of charge.

You can express your opinion, and this will help your child's school decide how and when to cover the content of the statutory guidance. It may also help them decide whether to teach additional non-statutory content. Schools are required to ensure their teaching reflects the age and religious background of their pupils.

Some schools will start to teach these subjects from September 2019 – if you'd like to know more, please speak to your child's school about what they plan to teach.



Right to withdraw your child

You cannot withdraw your child from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships and Sex Education, because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

If you do not want your child to take part in some or all of the Sex Education lessons delivered at secondary, you can ask that they are withdrawn. Your child's head teacher will consider this request and discuss it with you, and will grant this in all but exceptional circumstances, up until three school terms before your child turns 16. At this age, your child can choose to receive Sex Education if they would like to, and the school should arrange for your child to receive this teaching in one of those three terms (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

If your child's school is planning to teach these subjects from September 2019, your right to withdraw your child from Sex Education will be governed by the current legislation and so is absolute for the 2019/20 academic year – your child cannot opt in, and the head teacher will not overrule this request. This will remain the case until September 2020, when the new subjects will become compulsory and the new right to withdraw provisions will apply.

The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from.



Department
for Education

If you want to know more about what will be taught as part of these new subjects, the best thing to do is speak to your child's school.



HOW IS HIGHLANDS SCHOOL PREPARING FOR THE NEW STATUTORY RSE CURRICULUM?

1

We are currently reviewing our RSE policy and curriculum. We will have a new draft policy ready in the autumn term to share with our school community as part of a consultation process with governors, students, parents and staff.

2

RSE is currently taught as part of the school's PSHE curriculum and this will continue. From January 2021, RSE will be taught through a combination of PSHE lessons, extended tutor time and workshops.

3

While we prepare for our new curriculum students in years 7 and 8 will continue to receive our existing RSE curriculum through their weekly PSHE & citizenship lesson. Years 9-13 will continue to receive RSE through group workshops.

TIPS AND GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT PARENTS/CARERS IN DISCUSSING RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX WITH THEIR CHILD

Due to the sensitive nature of relationships and sex education, we have not included this as part of our remote curriculum. This is to ensure that information is carefully handled by a trained member of staff or a parent/carer. At Highlands School our RSE curriculum does not encourage sexual activity, but provides our students with age appropriate information to make healthy and informed choices when they are legally and emotionally ready to do so.

We recognise that students' personal and physical development continues during the time of school and they may have questions relating to relationships. We have put together a short guide to support parents and carers who would like to discuss relationships with their child. This guidance does not take into account religious and cultural influences on relationships as we believe that this is a personal matter and parents are best placed to advise their child on this. We have indicated the year group that these topics are usually addressed within the curriculum. The [NHS](#) and [Childline](#) have produced a helpful guidance document to support parents in discussing relationships and sex with their child.

**TOPIC****YEAR GROUP****QUESTIONS YOUNG PEOPLE MIGHT ASK**

**Puberty and the
journey to
adulthood.**

Year 7

- ? What is puberty?
- ? How will my body change as I grow up?
- ? What impact will puberty have on my emotions?
- ? What are periods and when do they happen?
- ? How can I maintain good personal care and hygiene?

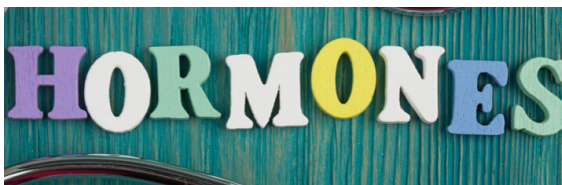
You can find more information on puberty on the nhs website [HERE](#).

**Healthy and
respectful
relationships**

All year groups

- ? How can I show that I am a good friend to someone?
- ? What are the different ways people show commitment in romantic relationships?
- ? What does a healthy relationship look like?
- ? What does an unhealthy relationship look like?
- ? What are your relationship values?
- ? What qualities would you look for in a future partner?
- ? How to manage relationships when they end.
- ? What do I do if a friend or partner is making me feel scared or unsafe?

You can find further information on healthy and respectful relationships on the [NSPCC](#) and [Childline](#) websites.





CONSENT

QUESTIONS YOUNG PEOPLE MIGHT ASK

TOPIC

Consent

YEAR GROUP

All year groups

- ? What is sexual consent?
- ? Why is sexual consent an important part of a healthy relationship?
- ? What does the law say about consent?

Click [HERE](#) for information on consent from the Government Equalities Office.





TOPIC

YEAR GROUP

**Different types
of families**

All year groups

QUESTIONS YOUNG PEOPLE MIGHT ASK

- ? What are the different types of families?
- ? How do couples show that they are committed?
- ? When is the right time to get married?
- ? When is the right time to have children?
- ? What skills and qualities are needed to be a good parent?



**TOPIC****YEAR GROUP****QUESTIONS YOUNG PEOPLE MIGHT ASK**

**Staying safe
online**

All year groups

- ? How can I stay safe online?
- ? What types of online content could be harmful to me?
- ? What types of information and images should I never share or request from others?

You can find more information on staying safe online on the [NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) website.



We will write to parents again in the autumn term to provide information and guidance about our new RSE and PSHE curriculum. In the meantime, if parents/carers would like any support or guidance about the topics raised in this newsletter, please email postbox@highlands.enfield.sch.uk. Students can email any queries to staysafe@highlearn.uk.