

FAQs regarding the changes to our RSHE teaching at Uplands Primary School.

The Department for Education has announced changes to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). These changes were brought in in September 2020 and all schools will be required to comply with the updated requirements, making Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. *As a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic, schools have been given until Summer 2021 to implement the changes.* It has been 20 years since the last review of these curriculum areas, and in that time the world has changed significantly. Children now face new challenges: they have to process lots of information from different sources such as TV, the internet, social media, understand how society is changing, understand risks they may face, all putting pressure on their physical and mental health. We believe relationships and sex education is important for our pupils and our school because:

- It is giving children the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships
- It is about giving children the opportunity to put knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.
- It is the recognition that everyone faces difficult situations in their lives and how relationship and sex education can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context to both complement and reinforce what pupils learn at home about healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online, as well as how to be healthy.

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

What is RSHE?

RSHE stands for Relationships, Sex and Health Education. It is taught within our PDL (Personal Development Learning) lessons. *PDL can sometimes be referred to as PSHE (Personal, Social and Health and Education)*

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

Sex education at Primary school is not compulsory. However, compulsory Relationships Education is being introduced in Primary schools from the Summer Term 2021, 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. At Uplands Primary School we currently teach sex education to children in Year 4 and Year 5/6 (which goes beyond the existing national curriculum for science). Before these lessons take place, we give parents the opportunity to understand what will be taught and how it will be approached, and view any materials so that you understand what we propose to teach and how. If you continue to have concerns, you have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum. We will continue to teach sex education (which focuses on puberty and reproduction). This is only part of the Science National Curriculum for Y5 and Y6. As it is part of the science national curriculum it is compulsory. We hold meetings with parents in Y5 and Y6 to discuss this and share materials. You have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum.

Is school the best place for discussions about Sex and Relationships?

We know, that in today's modern world, information about sex and relationships can be found from a huge range of sources, including friends, older siblings, websites, TV. If children do not get correct and accurate information from a reliable source, they will begin to seek information from alternative sources, which may not be true or age appropriate. The information gathered during the Government consultation found that most children wanted this information and discussion to be provided in school with their teachers so that they could ask their questions in a safe space, and have them answered in an age appropriate way.

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

The RSHE curriculum is designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain. It is not designed to conflict with any religious views. We are teaching about equality and we recognise and respect all faiths. 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 we know that our children will meet people who are different to them as they grow up. We welcome any parent feedback and encourage parents to get in touch to discuss any individual concerns with regard to this.

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

In a Primary School, you have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at Primary school as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

Will these subjects promote LGBT relationships?

No, these subjects don't 'promote' anything, they educate. We are teaching about equality. One of our school values is respect and this forms an integral part of our RSHE curriculum; we respect ourselves and all others. We are a welcoming and inclusive school where we welcome children and families, regardless of their background. 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. RSHE 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. Here at Uplands, 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. You can review our planned learning on our website for more detail.

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 we want them to treat all members of the community with the same respect. Just like racism, school has a duty of care to challenge any language that may cause offence to others, whether used intentionally or not. Phrases such as "that's a girls/boys toy" when used in a negative manner may unintentionally cause offence to a child or adult. School will challenge this language if it is used by children, parents or visitors as we want everyone to feel welcome.

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

We recognise and are grateful that many of you will want to support your child with their developing understanding at home. Each term, year groups will publish a termly newsletter on our website which will summarise and outline what will be taught. In the PDL section of our website, you will find a full breakdown of the units taught at Uplands and the supporting resources that are used. If you wish to discuss anything further then your child's class teacher will be happy to discuss this with you.

Will this work prompt my children to ask challenging questions?

It is possible! Your child(ren) trust you and home is likely to be their safest space to ask questions. Please refer to our newsletters and websites to see what has been discussed in school and we encourage you to have open, honest conversations at home. Staff are on hand if you would like any further advice with regard to discussions at home.