

BBC Teach: Guidance notes to support the use of BBC Teach films on relationships, sex and health education

The following is an extract from the Sex Education Forum's 'RSE definitions' guide (2020).

Legislation passed in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires that all primary schools in England provide Relationships Education and all secondary schools provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). In addition, Health Education becomes mandatory in all state-funded primary and secondary schools. Primary schools are encouraged, but not mandated to provide sex education.

The legislation gives parents a right to request to excuse their child from sex education in primary and secondary school, but not from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents cannot withdraw children from science. Maintained schools must follow National Curriculum Science.

Statutory guidance on Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (RSHE) (2019) requires that all schools must have a policy on Relationships Education and RSE, stating that within their policy schools should: define Relationships Education (primary) and define any sex education they choose to teach other than that covered in the science curriculum (primary).

Schools therefore need to be able to draw a line between Relationships Education and sex education in order to implement the parental right to request their child is excused from sex education.

Government guidance does not provide a definition for sex education, Relationships education, RSE or Health Education. Statutory guidance sets out content for primary Relationships Education in a series of tables listing what pupils should know 'by the end of primary'. There is no equivalent for sex education content. There is reference to sex education in primary schools in paragraph 67, which refers to sex education as including how a baby is conceived and born:

'Paragraph 67: The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born'. ([Statutory guidance on RSHE, 2019](#))

BBC Teach resources covering topics for relationships, sex and health education should be used as part of the school RSHE curriculum, which you and your school will have developed to reflect the needs of your pupils and in consultation with parents. You may choose to use these clips to support your KS2 science lessons as well. Some schools choose to draw cross-curricular links with these topics and other relevant subjects.

You should ensure you are up to date with best practice in RSHE teaching before delivering this content.

Examples of training in this area include:

- [Brook](#)
- [PSHE Association](#)
- [Sex Education Forum](#)

It is up to individual schools to define relationships education, sex education, health education and science. This may be stated in your school's policy. These films must be watched carefully prior to using them in class, to ensure that the content reflects their school policy and definitions.

Relationships, health and science are statutory elements of the curriculum in England.

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Sex education is not statutory at primary: parents have the right to withdraw their children from this element of the curriculum. See [DfE RSHE guidance](#) (paragraph 45-50).

Knowing what content has been delivered or planned in science is essential to the success of these lessons.

- Refer to paragraph 7 of the [DfE RSHE guidance](#)
- Refer to 'National curriculum subjects: citizenship, science, computing and PE' of the [DfE RSHE guidance](#) (particularly paragraph 106)

DfE National Curriculum Science sets out guidance for teaching reproduction, life cycles and puberty.

Safeguarding:

Teaching about families, relationships and bodies requires sensitive and well-judged teaching, based on knowledge of your pupils and their circumstances. Creating a safe space for RSHE lessons is really important. This can be done through agreeing a safe space code which includes respecting others, not oversharing and being mindful of others' feelings. Always make sure that your pupils know where to go if they need support.

Prior to teaching, you should consider:

- What is happening before and after the lesson for those pupils.
- Reminding pupils where to go for good answers to their questions, and if they need support.
- Informing the school community that these lessons are taking place, to enable all staff to respond to questions in a supportive and informative way.
- Discussing with your RSHE lead ways of responding to common questions that reflect your school's ethos and RSHE policy.
- Referring to 'Managing difficult questions' (paragraph 63 and 64 of the DfE's RSHE statutory guidance).
- Your school's safeguarding policy and procedures for dealing with safeguarding disclosures and concerns. See also 'Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality' (paragraphs 116 to 122 of the [DfE RSHE guidance](#)).

Pupils with SEND

Individual work may be needed to support the learning of pupils with SEND around concepts and terminology, appropriate time and place for discussions, respectfulness of others and oversharing.

You should ensure you have watched the clips prior to using them in class, as well as carrying out baseline assessments to establish areas of existing knowledge.

Communicate with your SENCO about the specific and additional needs of all pupils.

Support staff may need to prepare students, create bespoke resources, and revisit topics.

Please also refer to 'Pupils with SEND' (paragraphs 33 to 35 the [DfE RSHE guidance](#)).