

Key stages 1 & 2

PSHE
Association

Getting your PSHE education ready for statutory Relationships Education, Health Education and the new Ofsted framework

- The **Health Education** and **Relationships Education** aspects of PSHE (personal, social, health and economic) education will be compulsory in all primary schools from September 2020.
- Health Education won't be a 'new' requirement in independent schools, where PSHE education is already compulsory. However, it is expected that independent schools will draw on the new statutory guidance for Health Education when planning their PSHE education.

What does the new statutory guidance cover?

- The Department for Education published [statutory guidance for Health Education, Relationships Education and RSE](#) in June 2019.
- **This covers broad areas of particular relevance and concern to children and young people today.** It should ensure that every child is guaranteed a PSHE education that covers mental health and wellbeing, physical health (including healthy lifestyles and first aid) and learning about safe, healthy relationships, including understanding consent and negotiating life online.

How can schools meet statutory requirements effectively?

- **Many schools are well on the way to delivering these commitments** and should build on, rather than unpick, what they're already doing well. [85% of schools already teach PSHE that covers health and relationships](#). The new requirements are about **raising and 'levelling up' of PSHE standards** across all schools in a way that does not cause undue burden on workload and resources.
- **PSHE education needs regular curriculum time like any other subject.** 'Drop down' or 'off timetable' days can enhance a timetabled programme of regular, planned lessons but are not an appropriate or effective alternative to one. [91% of school leaders surveyed by NAHT agree on the need for regular, timetabled PSHE lessons.](#) (See [our guidance on models of PSHE delivery.](#))
- **Schools should tailor their programme to the needs of pupils and communities in order to be effective. There is no 'one-size-fits-all solution':** there are many useful programmes and resources that schools can use to *support* their PSHE provision, but PSHE programmes should always be tailored to the needs of a school's own pupils and community. (See our [PSHE planning toolkits for KS 1 & 2.](#))

- **Schools should not just 'teach to the guidance'**, but see it as the basic requirement which forms part of broader PSHE education.
- **The statutory guidance outlines what schools *must* cover – though not everything that schools *should* cover** – in PSHE from 2020. The Department for Education (DfE) says: *'All elements of PSHE are important and the government continues to recommend PSHE be taught in schools'*.
- The [PSHE Education Programme of Study KS 1 - 5](#), covers all of the statutory content as well as vital non-statutory content related to economic wellbeing and careers education.

- **Yes, otherwise the ‘personal’ aspects of economic wellbeing will be lost.** PSHE complements the financial education covered through Citizenship and Maths, but covers the personal aspects of economic wellbeing. It also lays the foundations of effective careers education, digital and media literacy (it is vital that the foundations of this learning are laid during the primary phase).
- **Health, relationships, economic wellbeing and successful careers are all linked. PSHE is the glue that binds them together.** PSHE gathers all of these aspects of preparing for modern life together into a coherent curriculum subject.
- **PSHE education is the vehicle through which schools can best ensure they meet many of the Gatsby benchmarks.** [DfE data shows that the most common approach to careers education is delivery through PSHE lessons \(87%\),](#) including the crucial early learning in primary years that raises aspirations and broadens understanding of the world of work. Therefore, schools should not undo what they are doing well in this area.

Why is this all so important?

- PSHE education has [proven impact](#) on life chances and academic success when delivered well, but has suffered from reduced curriculum time and patchy provision.
- **This strengthening of PSHE education's status can have a major impact** on the quality of PSHE in all schools for all pupils.
- **These developments mean that all pupils can benefit** from an education that keeps them safe, healthy and prepared for the realities of modern life.

“The evidence shows that personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education can improve the physical and psychosocial well-being of pupils. A virtuous cycle can be achieved, whereby pupils with better health and well-being can achieve better academically, which in turn leads to greater success.”

Department for Education [review](#) of PSHE education impact and effective practice

[An extensive 2017 literature review](#) by leading economists found ‘*Very strong evidence*’ that PSHE (personal, social, health and economic) learning has a positive impact on health, well being and academic attainment.

- These new statutory requirements do not extend to **sex education** at KS 1 and 2 (beyond the biological/reproductive aspects schools are already required to cover in science)
- However, the Department for Education *‘continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils’*
- Where schools provide sex education at key stages 1 and 2, parents will have the right to withdraw their child from sex education but not from statutory Relationships Education or Health Education

All primary schools will need to have a Relationships Education policy in place (or where sex education is also taught, an RSE policy). This must be freely available for parents to access, and include:

- an outline of what will be taught to children within the Relationships Education/RSE curriculum
- a rationale for this learning (for example in relation to safeguarding)
- a clear procedure for withdrawal from sex education
- reasons why the school believes children should not be withdrawn from these lessons

[Download PSHE Association guidance](#) on how to write a comprehensive policy.

The new statutory guidance outlines requirements regarding policies:

<i>Policies for mandatory subjects</i>		<i>Policy for non-mandatory subjects</i>
For primary education	For secondary education	For primary schools that may choose to teach sex education
Define Relationships Education	Define Relationships and Sex Education	Define any sex education they choose to teach other than that covered in the science curriculum.
Set out the subject content, how it is taught and who is responsible for teaching it.		
Describe how the subject is monitored and evaluated.		
Include information to clarify why parents <i>do not</i> have a right to withdraw their child.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused from sex education within RSE only.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused.
Confirm the date by which the policy will be reviewed.		

The new statutory guidance outlines requirements regarding policies:

Typical policies are likely to include sections covering:

- details of content/scheme of work and when each topic is taught, taking account of the age of pupils
- who delivers either Relationships Education or RSE
- how the policy has been produced, and how it will be kept under review, in both cases working with parents
- how delivery of the content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- explanation of the right to withdraw
- requirements on schools in law e.g. the Equality Act (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice)
- how often the policy is updated
- who approves the policy

- Schools do not have to have a policy for Health Education, or for broader PSHE education, but we would recommend having a PSHE policy that includes (or links to) your RSE policy and includes specific information on Health Education.
- See [our guidance on creating a PSHE education policy for your school](#)

- **Open dialogue:** It is important to create and maintain an open dialogue between parents and teachers as early as possible. As the DfE statutory guidance states: *‘Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school’s approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.’*
- **It’s not all about sex!:** Schools should engage with parents about the whole of the PSHE education curriculum from the beginning of their child’s school career. This will foster a greater understanding of (and support for) a subject that encompasses diverse topics from first aid and road safety to healthy eating and staying safe online, rather than allowing parents to see this as a subject that’s just about sex.
- **Mechanisms for engagement:** Most schools have existing mechanisms in place to engage parents. They should continue to use these as their means of engaging parents with all aspects of PSHE including Relationships and Health Education – there is no requirement that this should involve new or additional mechanisms.

- **PSHE Association guide to parental engagement:** The PSHE Association has published [a guide with practical advice for primary schools on engaging with parents](#) about PSHE education – including a template letter and parent workshop plan – on how to positively communicate with parents about statutory Relationships Education in particular, as well as an overview of statutory requirements regarding withdrawal of pupils from sex education.
- **DfE ‘Parental Engagement on Relationships Education’ guidance:** The DfE also published [parental engagement guidance](#) for schools in October 2019. It includes relevant information, advice, tips and case studies on effective parental engagement.

- **DfE guidance for parents:** The Department for Education has published [a useful list of FAQs for parents](#) on the new RSE/Relationships Education requirements, and [new guides for parents](#) on Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.
- **Key DfE requirements:** The DfE is clear that schools should publish relevant policies online, and ensure parents are consulted and examples of resources shared.
- **What the DfE says about parents and curriculum content:**
‘What is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the school and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content’.

- There have been challenges from a vocal minority of parents to schools' commitment to equality and diversity, including LGBT+ inclusion.
- The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has produced [a useful policy update](#) on schools' commitments under the Equality Act.

Does the new Ofsted framework put greater emphasis on PSHE?

- **Yes, there is more scope for PSHE education to be a focus of inspections under the new framework (including through ‘deep dives’)** in providing evidence for key judgements, particularly ‘personal development’. The [new Ofsted inspection handbook](#) also refers specifically to the inclusion of the new statutory content in the curriculum, and that *‘if a school is failing to meet its obligations, inspectors will consider this when reaching the personal development judgement’*.
- Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman [said](#) that *“In the new inspection model, we are particularly interested in how schools contribute to the personal development of children. This area is now a judgement in its own right. **This makes more space in inspection for discussing things like the PSHE lessons in which wider life issues can be explored.**”*
- PSHE education also makes a unique contribution to safeguarding, and will support schools to fulfil their statutory duty to teach pupils to keep themselves safe. See the statutory [‘Keeping children safe in education guidance](#) for schools and colleges on safeguarding children.

- [Programme of Study for PSHE Education](#) (Key stages 1-5), and [‘We’ve got it Covered’](#) guide (which maps the new statutory Health Education, Relationships Education and RSE guidance to the PSHE education Programme of Study).
- [PSHE Association mental health lesson plans and teacher guidance](#): a suite of lesson plans available in slideshow and pdf. document format.
- [‘Preparing for statutory RSE and relationships education’](#) packs; and the [‘Roadmap to statutory RSE’](#) (jointly produced by the PSHE Association and the Sex Education Forum).
- [Our suite of CPD training days](#) on preparing for statutory relationships education, preparing for statutory health education, getting your PSHE education ‘Ofsted ready’ for the new framework, and more.
- [A range of resources](#) that have gained the PSHE Association Quality Mark.
- [Guide to parental engagement](#): practical advice for primary schools on engaging with parents about PSHE education.

- The PSHE Association is the national body for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education — the school curriculum subject that supports pupils to be healthy, safe and prepared for modern life. PSHE education incorporates health education, relationships education/RSE and economic wellbeing and careers.
- A charity and membership organisation, the PSHE Association works to improve PSHE education standards by supporting a national community of over 30,000 teachers and schools with resources, training and advice. Find out more at www.pshe-association.org.uk.