

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.
- **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.
- **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.](#))

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

- 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.

- **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’.

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.