

RSHE: Successfully implementing the 2025 statutory requirements

Key stages 3-4

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Session aims:

- Explore the new statutory requirements for RSHE
- Reflect on what these mean for your school, policy and curriculum
- Build confidence in delivering new RSHE topic areas

New content and requirements

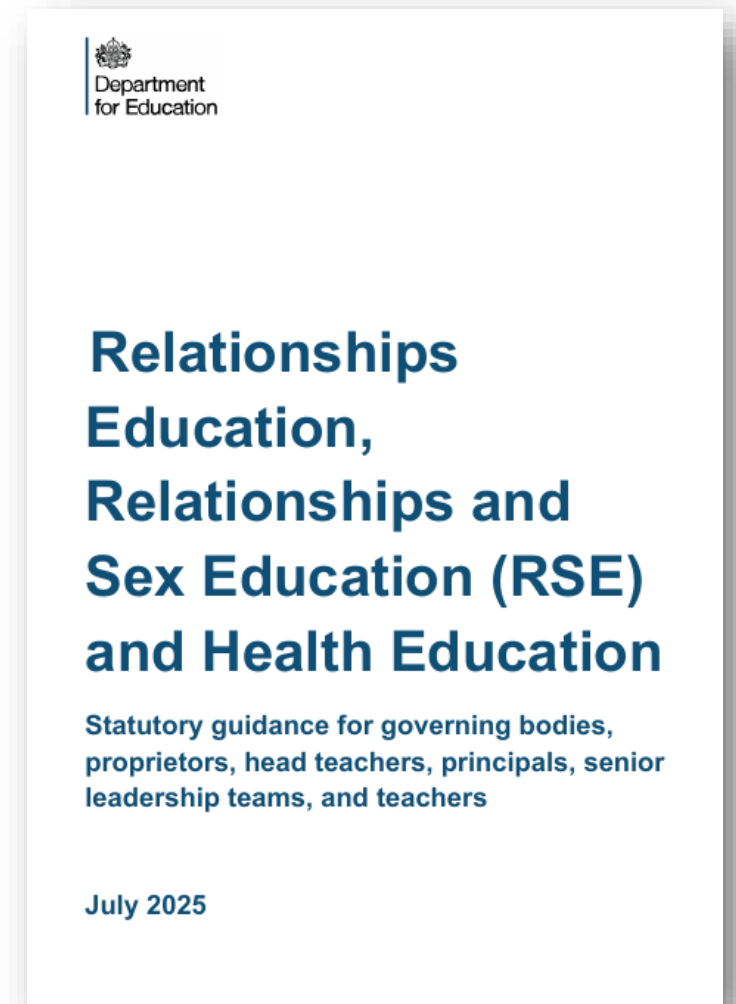


New RSHE guidance

Replaces the existing 2019 RSHE guidance, for implementation from 1st September 2026.

A new series of 'Guiding principles for relationships, sex and health education':

- a) Engagement with pupils
- b) Engagement and transparency with parents
- c) Positivity
- d) Careful sequencing
- e) Relevant and responsive
- f) Skilled delivery of participative education
- g) Whole school approach



New RSE content

- Sexual ethics; a more sophisticated way of exploring consent inc. power dynamics
- Greater focus on pornography
- Suffocation and strangulation
- Misogyny and incel culture
- AI chatbots, images and deepfakes
- Online financial harms inc. scams and sextortion
- FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty
- HIV prevention drugs

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline... In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.”

New Health content

- Online misinformation and conspiracy theories
- Vaping, including illicit vapes
- Personal safety relating to drink spiking and methanol poisoning
- Accessing healthcare services
- Gillick competence and medical consent
- Personal safety, including travel safety, violence prevention and knife crime
- Menstrual and gynaecological health
- **To consider:** teaching on self-harm, eating disorders and suicide prevention

“The aim of teaching about health and wellbeing is to enable pupils to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing... Schools should support pupils to develop strategies for self-regulation, perseverance and determination, even in the face of setbacks.”

What remains the same?



Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

Statutory guidance for governing bodies,
proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior
leadership teams, and teachers

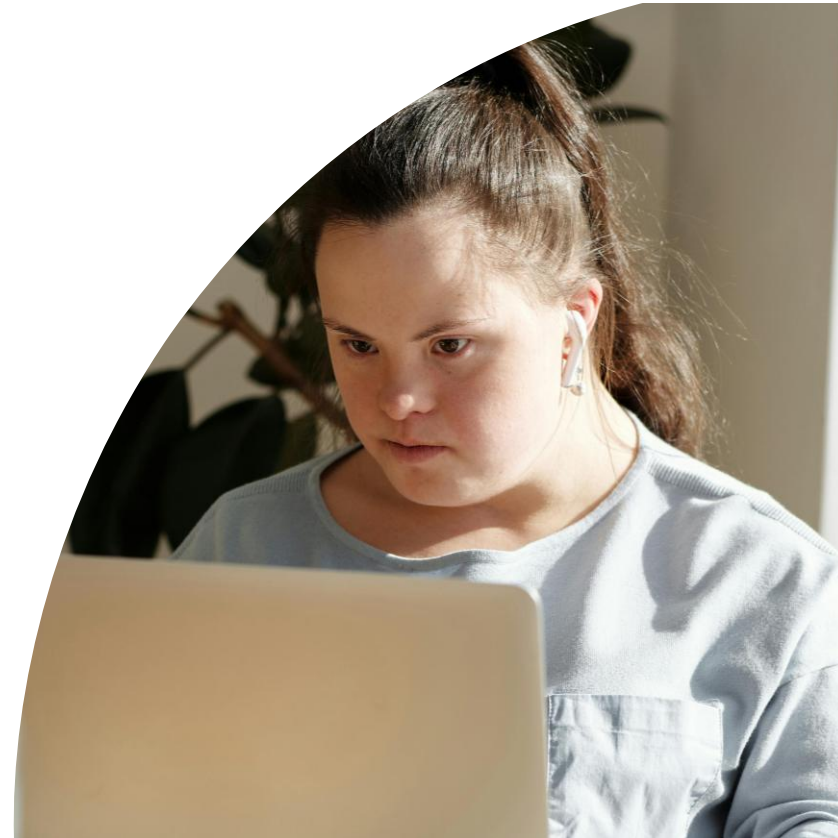
July 2025

- Much of the content around families, respectful relationships, being safe and intimate sexual relationships remains similar, although with some changes to approaches and additional content
- Many aspects of health education also remain, including first aid, healthy eating and physical health and fitness
- The right to withdraw remains consistent
- Continues to recommend expectations about assessment, subject leadership and cross curricular opportunities

Supporting SEND pupils

Teaching should be developed to ensure these subjects are **accessible for pupils with SEND and prepare pupils for adulthood...** This applies to both mainstream and special schools.

Schools should be aware that **pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable** than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. **RSHE can be particularly important for these pupils**, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.



Teaching about LGBT

At secondary school, there should be an **equal opportunity** to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships, and secondary schools should ensure that this content is **integrated into RSHE programmes of study** rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson.

Schools should ensure that they cover all the **facts about sexual health, including STIs, in a way that is relevant for all pupils**, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or gender questioning.



Teaching about LGBT

Pupils should also be taught **the facts and the law** about biological sex and gender reassignment...

In teaching this, schools should be mindful that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate, and they should be careful not to endorse any particular view or teach it as fact. For example, **they should not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity.**

Where schools decide to use external resources, they should avoid materials that use cartoons or diagrams that oversimplify this topic... or that perpetuate stereotypes **or encourage pupils to question their gender.**



Developing an RSE policy

Previously (2019 guidance):

- Definition of Relationships and Sex Education
- The subject content, how it's taught and who is responsible for teaching it
- How it's monitored and evaluated
- Information about the right to withdrawal
- The policy review date

New 2025 guidance:

- The subject content, how and when it will be taught
- Who is responsible for teaching, inc. any external providers
- Differentiate between relationships and sex education
- Information about the right to withdrawal and how parents can view curriculum materials
- Explain how teachers will answer questions about topics in sex education from which the child has been withdrawn
- How content will be made accessible to pupils with SEND
- Describe how the subject is monitored and evaluated
- Explain how the policy has been produced, who approves the policy, how and when it will be reviewed

Working with parents: Right to withdraw

- Parents discuss concerns with staff to agree withdrawal from 'sex' elements of RSE.
- 3 terms before they turn 16, pupils can opt back in to RSE. The school has a duty to provide sex education during one of the remaining three terms.
- There is no right of withdrawal from other aspects of PSHE, such as health education.

“Everyone has relationships with others, and most pupils will develop sexual relationships at some point in their lives... Relationships education may therefore include topics related to preventing sexual abuse, for example, or avoiding sharing inappropriate material online. This can be done without describing the detail of any sexual activity involved.”

Openness with parents

- Expectation that schools will proactively engage parents
- Schools should share a representative sample of RSE lessons with parents, and all materials on request
- Materials can be shared in face-to-face meetings or workshops, via a parent portal, or where these are not possible, sent home
- Schools should not agree to contracts with external providers which prevent them sharing materials with parents
- Parents do not have a veto on curriculum content, but they should be aware



A focus on safe practice



A focus on safe environment

When teaching sensitive topics, teachers can use approaches such as **distancing techniques**, setting **ground rules** with the class to help manage sensitive discussion, and using **question boxes** to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

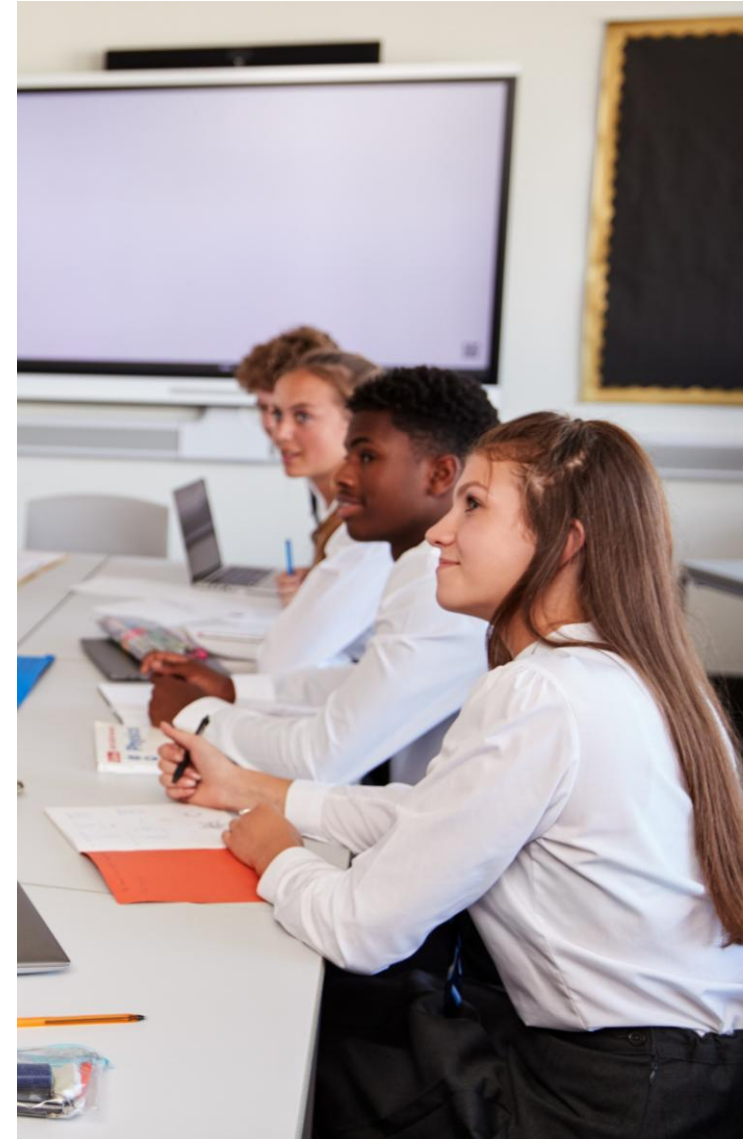
It is equally important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report, about themselves or a peer. Pupils should also understand **where they can report any concerns and seek help**, including to external services if they do not feel comfortable talking to school staff.

Effective, high-quality teaching will break down core knowledge and skills into manageable and **well-sequenced units**, including opportunities for pupils to **practise skills** so that they will be confident to use them in real-life situations.

A safe environment

They should take particular care **not to discuss instructions or methods** of self-harm or suicide and avoid using emotive language, videos or images as there is a risk this could signpost pupils towards dangerous ideas and online content of which they may not previously have been aware.

Teachers should take care to **avoid language which romanticises** eating disorders and avoid discussing instructions, methods or ideas of restriction, bingeing or purging.



A safe environment

Content and examples should relate to the local context and **avoid using fear as an educational tool**. Children should be taught that carrying weapons is uncommon, and should not be scared into the perception that many young people are carrying knives (which can lead to the misconception that they need to carry a knife too).

Teachers should **avoid language which stigmatises boys** or suggests that boys or men are always perpetrators or that girls or women are always victims.



Working with visitors

“Schools should check that external resources are accurate, age and stage appropriate and unbiased... Schools are responsible for checking the credentials of any visitor or visiting organisation.”

“Schools should ask to see materials and a lesson plan in advance, and should seek the views of parents, making sure that all materials can be viewed by parents.”

“Where lessons are delivered by external agencies, schools must agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by the external visitor.”



Safe practice at all times

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A safe classroom

Establishing a safe teaching and learning environment for PSHE education lessons

- Agree ground rules
- Handle questions safely
- Consider vulnerabilities
- Ensure inclusivity
- Use distancing strategies
- Signpost support
- Know your policies

For more information, see our guidance on [Handling complex issues safely in the PSHE classroom](#).

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Effective teaching

Best practice principles for teaching PSHE education

- Give time for personal reflection
- Make learning accessible to all
- Handle myths with care
- Assess learning and progress
- Balance knowledge, skills and attributes
- Provide accurate, unbiased information
- Don't set out to shock, shame or scare
- Start from where the pupils are
- Take a positive approach
- Don't inspire, glamourise or instruct in harmful behaviours

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For more information, see our guidance on [Planning and choosing great PSHE lessons](#).

Getting to grips with the new content



What new areas of the curriculum content might be tricky to teach?



Pornography



AI literacy and deepfake images



The manosphere and incel culture



Violence against women and girls



Sexual ethics beyond consent

Spotlight on pornography

- 70% of survey respondents (age 16-21) had seen pornography online.
- The average age of first viewing pornography is 13, with 27% of young people encountering pornography before 11.
- 59% encountered porn by accident.
- 58% had seen porn depicting strangulation before they turned 18, and 44% had seen depictions of rape.
- 8 out of the top 10 sources of pornography were social media or social networking sites.



Pornography

Spotlight on AI and Deepfakes

- 63% of children and young people heard about AI from social media, and by ages 12-15, 53% have used it.
- 13% of UK teenagers have encountered nude deepfakes generated by AI.
- 98% of all deepfakes are sexually explicit, and 99% of these target women and girls.
- 10% of boys aged 13-17 have come across a nude deepfake online, compared to 2% of girls.



AI literacy and
deepfake images

“If a nude image was sent of me currently that I consented to filming even though it's sad I would know that was my choice... However, with a deepfake I didn't choose for that image to be created.”

Girl, aged 16

Spotlight on the manosphere and incel culture

- 80% of 16- and 17-year-old boys have viewed content created by well-known misogynistic influencer Andrew Tate
- 23% of 13- to 15-year-old boys approve of Andrew Tate – **but this means that 77% don't!**
- 59% of teenage boys have been served misogynistic content online without searching for it.



The manosphere and incel culture



Male 'self-improvement'



Dating and relationships



Body image



Anti-feminism

Spotlight on VAWG

“It is important to acknowledge that most sexual violence is committed against women and girls, and it often has a gendered component – for example, **manifesting an inequality of power between men and women**. However, anyone can be affected by sexual violence.”

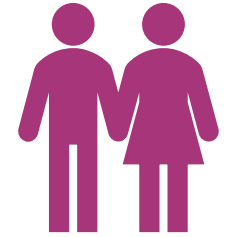
“Both within and beyond the classroom, **staff should be conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes**, and should take action to build a culture where prejudice is identified and tackled... Where misogynistic ideas are expressed at school, staff should challenge the ideas, rather than the person expressing them.”

“Pupils should have opportunities to **develop positive conceptions of masculinity and femininity**, including how to identify and learn from positive male role models.”



Violence against women and girls

Spotlight on sexual ethics



Sexual ethics
beyond consent

“The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that **just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn’t automatically make it ethically ok.**”

“**How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships,** including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others.”

“That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent.”

Final thoughts and next steps



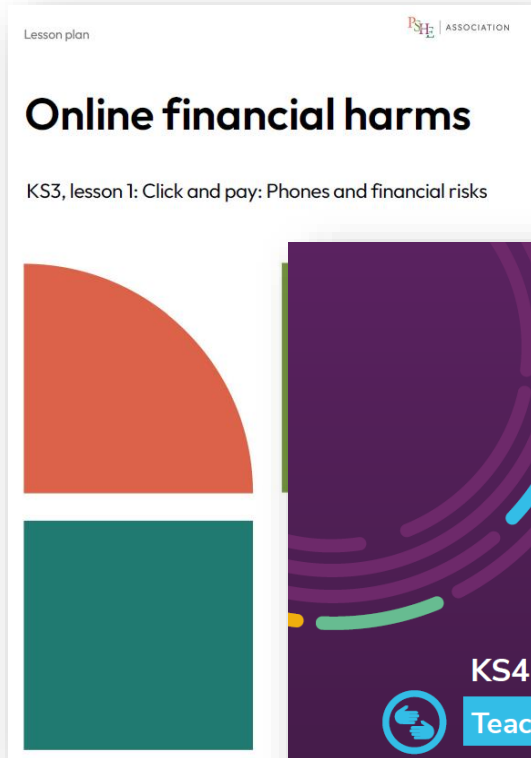
Resources to support you

Lesson plan

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Online financial harms

KS3, lesson 1: Click and pay: Phones and financial risks



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KS4

Teaching about consent

Lesson Plans & Resources

Lesson Plans

- Lesson 1: The role of intimacy and pleasure Page 2
- Lesson 2: The impact of pornography Page 7
- Lesson 3: Pressure, persuasion, and coercion Page 13

Resources

- Lesson 1 resources Page 19
- Lesson 2 resources Page 24
- Lesson 3 resources Page 28



Teacher guide

Online misogyny and manosphere



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Teacher guidance

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KS2-4

Digital deception: Understanding deepfakes



*Please read this guidance before teaching the lessons

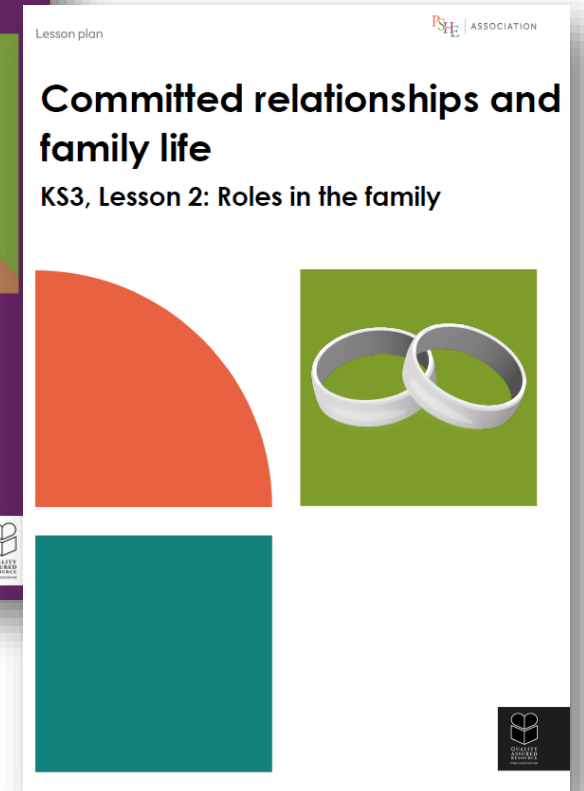
QUALITY STANDARD

Lesson plan

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Committed relationships and family life

KS3, Lesson 2: Roles in the family



QUALITY STANDARD

Final thoughts

- Don't rush into making changes; it's important these are embedded effectively and meaningfully
- Collaborate with colleagues and get your senior leaders on board
- Upskill your team with the knowledge and confidence they need to deliver high quality PSHE education
- Refer back to our website for support along the way
- Prioritise the changes that matter most to your students in your school



What are your next steps?

- Think about your timeline for the coming academic year.
- What do you need to do to prepare?
- What do you want to prioritise?

Staff training

Curriculum
audit

Pupil voice

Parent
engagement

Update policy

Develop subject
knowledge

Monitoring
teaching

Medium term
planning

Create new
lessons





Questions

Thank you for being here today!



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