

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Luton Primary Schools

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Contents

December 2020	1
Contents.....	1
Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education Primary stage – Luton Council (2019)	2
National changes to relationship, sex and health education delivery	2
Mandatory relationships education – statutory requirements	3
By the end of primary school, all children are required to know the following:	3
Luton recommended RSE programme	4
The Christopher Winter Programme (CWP) RSE primary	4
Jigsaw	4
NSPCC	4
Discovery Health and Relationships	5
Frequently asked questions.....	5

Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education Primary stage – Luton Council (2019)

National changes to relationship, sex and health education delivery

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the government is committed to making relationships education (primary), relationships, and sex education (secondary) statutory in all schools, including LA maintained schools, academies, free schools and independent schools. All schools will be required to have relationships education/RSE in place and a relationships and sex education policy.

From September 2020, all primary schools were required to teach age-appropriate relationships education, and all secondary schools were required to teach age-appropriate relationships and sex education.

Schools should have started teaching from that date if they met the statutory requirements however if they were not ready, or were unable to meet the requirements, teaching should begin by the start of the summer term 2021.

The focus in Luton primary schools is teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. Thus ensuring our children are upskilled with the knowledge and tools to develop into healthy informed and emotionally well citizens within modern Britain, being able to recognise harmful behaviours and seek help for themselves or others.

Luton and our partner agencies are committed to ensuring our children and young people are given the knowledge and tools to develop into healthy, informed and emotionally well citizens within modern Britain. Our principles are:

Inclusion – every child feels included, respected, and valued

Tolerance – children grow up to be respectful of people who are different

Moral code – respect, tolerance, love, relationships, stability

In real terms, the statutory changes will have no effect on RSE within the Luton schools that have already adopted the recommended Luton RSE programmes. Luton has always had a strong focus on relationships including relationships with:

- self
- family
- peers
- community

The recommended Luton primary curriculum is a relationship and health based curriculum with schools and their governors being able to **opt in** to the sex education teaching elements by agreement.

The good practice of consulting parents, ensuring staff are trained to confidently deliver and that resources are age appropriate and of good quality has always been at the heart of Luton's RSE programme.

In addition, Luton has always asked schools to invite parents into school for consultation when implementing a new RSE programme. Best practice has also always been to invite in any parent/carer who has sought to withdraw their children from RSE. This allows for school and parent/carer to discuss the materials. Schools are then able to explain the importance of safeguarding children within the modern world and dispel the many myths and misconceptions around what is taught.

Our RSE curriculum is in line with Luton Council values:

Act with integrity

Embrace equality and diversity, cohesion and inclusion

Show respect for others

Constantly strive for improvement

Focus on our customers and citizens Promote

accountability to local people

Mandatory relationships education – statutory requirements

Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools

The focus in primary school will be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

By the end of primary school, all children are required to know the following:

Families and people who care for me - pupils should know:

- That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
- That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
- That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

Caring friendships - pupils should know:

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
- The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
- That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

Respectful relationships - pupils should know:

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- The conventions of courtesy and manners

- The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
- That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
- What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive; the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

Online relationships - pupils should know:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
- How information and data is shared and used online

Being safe - pupils should know:

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe
- That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Luton recommended RSE programme

To support schools to deliver a high quality RSHE delivery the following programmes have been identified:

The Christopher Winter Programme (CWP) RSE primary

The CWP have developed programmes for PSHE Education since 1995. The RSE primary programme is a quality, age appropriate PSHE Association assured resource. The PSHE Association is the national body for Personal Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. This quality mark allows schools to deliver RSE with confidence. Currently over 50% of Luton primary schools have already adopted this RSE curriculum.

The overview of the CWP programme can be found following this link [Christopher winter Programme overview](#)

Jigsaw

A comprehensive Programme for Primary PSHE including statutory Relationships and Health Education, in a spiral, progressive and fully planned scheme of work, giving children relevant learning experiences to help them navigate their world and to develop positive relationships with themselves and others.

Further information can be found here [Link to the Jigsaw website](#)

NSPCC

A healthy relationship programme to promote healthy relationships to children of different ages. Includes specific curriculum guidance. Further information can be found here [Link to the NSPCC resources](#)

Discovery Health and Relationships

A new digital PSHE programme that covers the complete set of Relationships and Health Education objectives for primary schools.

Child-led scenario-based videos engage pupils with the real world. Videos feature children interviewed on key topics, use animation to bring learning to life and provide opportunities for pupils to role-play and make decisions that directly impact their lives

Further information can be found here [Link to the Discovery Education Health & Relationships website](#)

Frequently asked questions

1. What is the difference between relationships education and sex education?

Relationships education is teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

This starts with children being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, children are taught how to take turns; how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect; the importance of honesty and truthfulness; permission seeking and giving; and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent. The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet.

Sex education ensures 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.

2. Does school encourage marriage? I believe this is the most stable way to live

Marriage between two loving adults is very much recognised within relationships education along with other relationships that people decide upon. Relationship education does not focus on one particular narrative but gives factual unbiased information, which allows for children to make their own informed choices in adulthood.

3. When will my child be taught pornography?

Pornography is not mentioned during the primary stage, as it is not age appropriate. When discussed, not taught, with young adults the focus is on the dangers of addiction, the harmful effects pornography can have on future adult relationships in terms of expectations versus reality and the negative portrayal of women.

4. Can I withdraw my child from lessons?

The new legislation brought in through the Children and Social Work Act 2017 will bring about some important changes in relation to parental rights to withdraw children from school RSE:

Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from relationships education in primary school or secondary school.

Parents will be able to withdraw their child from primary school classes, which address sex education - i.e. those that do not sit within the Relationships Education curriculum

Maintained primary schools are required to teach National Curriculum science, which includes some elements of sex education, parents do not have a right to withdraw from this

if you wish to withdraw your child from the non-statutory elements you can arrange an appointment with your school to discuss this

5. Don't children learn anything else in PSHE other than sex?

The PSHE curriculum is extremely broad and covers many other topics such as:

- Financial capabilities
- Emotional and mental wellbeing
- Health eating

- Physical activity
- Basic First Aid
- Gangs and knife crime citizenship
- The law

Relationships and sex education consists of approximately three lessons per year

6. I believe that a family should be a man and a woman. How does this match up with what is taught in schools?

In schools we teach that families are made up in many different forms and can include, for example: single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, and foster parents/carers amongst other structures. The most important element of any family group is that it provides a nurturing environment for children.

7. Everyone in my child's class is Muslim and feels the same as me. Shouldn't this be reflected in what is taught?

The RSE curriculum fully supports the Luton Council values of embracing equality and diversity, cohesion and inclusion whilst showing respect for others. The guiding principles being that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

8. My child is too young to learn about sex - I believe that RSE will sexualise my child – how can school prevent this?

There is a myth that talking or learning about sex and relationships sexualises children and young people. There is strong evidence (Kirby 2007, UNESCO 2009, NICE 2010) that comprehensive relationships and sex education actually delays the initiation of sex, reduces the number of sexual partners and increases the use of condoms and contraception in adulthood. There is no evidence that RSE hastens the first experience of sex.

9. I teach my child that being gay is wrong in our culture. Surely, school should respect this?

Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against people because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). To undermine the rights of one of the protective characteristics is to undermine the rights of them all. Relationship education nurtures tolerance allowing children to grow up to be respectful of people who are different.

10. It is my job to teach my child about sex and relationships – you are taking away my right to bring up my child within my values.

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. All schools will work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools will ensure that parents know what will be taught and when, for example, by inviting parents into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues and keeping children safe.

11. Teaching children about sex just encourages it – I don't want my child to know about adult matters so young.

Primary RSE does not teach children about sex. It educates children on the importance of loving respectful relationships along with biological information regarding how the body changes during puberty and conception.

12. Why does my child have to know about homosexuality?

Everyone in Britain is protected by the Equality Act 2010. This act protects people against discrimination because of the protected characteristics.

Relationship education prepares children for adulthood in modern Britain, teaching respect for other people's human rights and tolerance of those that are different from themselves. This includes respecting people from different religions, different ethnic backgrounds as well as people of different sexuality.

13. How will teaching about RSE keep my child safe on the internet?

Children are taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This includes how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Some children are exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.

14. Surely learning about homosexuality and transgender issues is going to encourage my child to consider this as an option for themselves.

Raising awareness around LGBT issues does not encourage or teach children to become homosexual or transgender. It does however teach tolerance and respect for others. It can also provide support and comfort to those who may be homosexual or transgender or have family members or friends that belong to this group.

15. Luton Council is asking all primary schools to teach the sex education element of the new curriculum

Luton Council requires primary schools to teach the statutory elements of the relationship and health curriculum. Schools and governors are able to **opt in** to the teaching of the sex education element of the curriculum should they wish to do so.