

Effective Relationship and Health Education (RHE) Consultation

Primary

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Statutory Relationship and Health Education (RHE) Primary Schools

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 the government committed to making Relationships and Health Education statutory in all primary schools, including local authority maintained schools, academies, free schools and independent schools.

Statutory requirements are to ensure that every primary school child is guaranteed a relationship and health 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.

RHE policy and parental engagement

All primary schools are required to have a RHE policy in place that is available for parents to access.

Policy

A RHE Policy must work for the school, but it is important to make sure that it is the needs of pupils that drive the policy, rather than the professional or personal comfort of the adults. (PSHE Association)

Under the Education Act 2002 /Academies Act 2010, all schools **must** provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

Governors

Governors should:

- Ensure the school has a RHE policy in line with statutory guidance
- Ensure the school reviews the RHE policy every two to three years
- Have a lead governor to work with the PSHE/ RHE leader or lead school member
- Ensure that RHE is in the school development plan so it is coordinated across the curriculum
- Ensure the staff receive training
- Work with and listen to parents
- Support the school in its delivery of the Public Sector Equalities Duty

Parental engagement

As part of the implementation of the RHE curriculum, it is important to create and maintain an open dialogue between parents and teachers.

DfE statutory guidance states: *'Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationship and Health Education. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.'*

The DfE is clear that schools should publish relevant policies online, ensure parents are consulted with and share examples of resources. However *‘what is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the school and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content’*.

Schools already have mechanisms in place to engage parents. These can continue to be used as the means of engaging parents with RHE – there is no requirement that this should involve new or additional mechanisms.

Effective RHE engagement checklist -

Successful approaches for engaging effectively include the following:

Activity	Approaches	Resources
<p>Policy consultation</p>	<p>Parents Parent surveys or questionnaires can help schools establish parents’ current understanding and/or concerns around the implementation of RHE. Surveys such as these can be used to inform future information evenings, newsletters and other communications</p> <p>Pupils Pupil surveys such as the SHEU (School Health Education Unit) survey or classroom activities are excellent tools for schools to understand the knowledge, understanding and behaviours of their pupils highlighting risk, concerns, knowledge gaps and areas for development.</p> <p>Governors Governors should play a key role in supporting policy consultation with parents, including encouraging attendance at school meetings and providing support to the school in ensuring sincere consultation is undertaken. Governors’ responsibilities are detailed in the Governance Handbook and in the code of conduct. Governors are responsible for ensuring the school discharges its duties under the equalities act https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty, the delivery of the statutory curriculum and safeguarding of all pupils.</p>	<p>Useful resources</p> <p>NAHT Edge Relationships education in primary schools</p> <p>Example Luton primary policy</p> <p>RHE policy guidance</p> <p>Example parent consultation questions</p> <p>Definitions for RSHE primary and secondary</p>
<p>Information evenings/ coffee mornings/ parents evenings</p>	<p>Parents are informed of the RHE content their child will be learning during the academic year. This should occur annually to support parents through their child’s school RHE journey. These should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is being taught • When topics are being taught • The rationale and safeguarding relating to the topics • Signposting of additional support for parents • Information on the right to withdraw and the accompanying process. 	<p>Example Luton online parent consultation</p>

Activity	Approaches	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example materials 	
Open door policy	Schools should ensure that parents are able to meet individually with their children's class teachers should they have any further questions or concerns not answered by information sessions or school website.	
School website	The school website should support parents by providing: RHE policy curriculum timetable overview, FAQs Supporting materials/website links RHE information video clips (if available)	FAQ - parents
Ongoing parental communication	Schools should make sure that parents receive information/reminders before RHE topics are taught. This should happen throughout the year, being sent out in good time to ensure that parents can support their children and prepare for any questions their children may ask. All information should be accompanied with advice on how parents can access support should they require it.	Example parent supporting materials- ThinkUknow DfE- Relationships and health education: guides for parents What to do if you're not happy with what your child is being taught – Flow chart

School checklist for effective consultation on the Primary Relationships and Health Education Curriculum

Policy consultation	Activity	RAG/notes
Parents	Questionnaires to identify understanding and concerns	
	Information evening	
	newsletter	
	Other communications	
Pupils	Pupil surveys/activities undertaken to identify gaps/needs	
	SHEU survey	
Governors	Governors support in helping harder to reach parents be involved in the consultation activities	
	Governors understand and support the policy	
	Governors are involved in parental consultation	
Annual Engagement with Parents		
	Coffee morning	
	Information evening	
	Parents' evenings	
	What is being taught	
	When topics are being taught	
	The rationale and safeguarding relating to the topics	
	Signposting of additional support for parents	
	Example materials	
	If the school have opted to deliver the sex education element, information on the right to withdraw and the accompanying process.	
'Open door' policy	Ongoing parental communication:	
	Parents can meet individually with their classroom teachers should they have any further questions or concerns not answered by information sessions or school website	
	Parents receive information/ reminders in good time before RHE topics are taught.	
	Parents can support their children and prepare for any questions their children may ask.	
	Advice on how parents can access support should they require it.	
School website	The school website should support parents by providing:	
	RHE policy	

Policy consultation	Activity	RAG/notes
	Curriculum timetable overview	
	FAQs	
	Supporting materials/website links	
	RHE information video clips (if available)	
	Information in relevant languages	
School Improvement		
	The RHE curriculum is well planned and sequenced	
	The implementation of the RHE curriculum is monitored	
	There is an identified subject leader for RHE	
	Staff are confident about teaching RHE because they have received effective subject-knowledge CPD	
	RHE has a high status in the school as part of children's personal development and the quality of education children receive	