



HOLLY PARK SCHOOL

Briefing Sheet for Parents on Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Updated to reflect the new statutory RSHE guidance (DfE, 2025), in force from September 2026

1. Introduction

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an integral part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum throughout the school. We have a responsibility to prepare our pupils for life in 21st Century Britain, including recognising and being able to form healthy relationships and having the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe.

These lessons will continue to reflect our school values and link with our statutory duties to actively promote British Values, comply with the Equality Act, keep our children safe and meet the changing needs of all families in our school community. These lessons also support our constant challenge to prevent bullying. We value the relationship we have with our parents and will continue to inform them with regard to our PSHE curriculum. We see these lessons as the continuation of conversations that will have started at home.

From September 2026, our curriculum and policies will follow the new statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education published by the Department for Education (DfE) in 2025, which replaces the guidance that has been in place since 2019. Our updated PSHE Policy and Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy can be found on our school website.

2. Statutory Elements

All schools have a statutory obligation to deliver the elements of Relationships and Sex Education which fall under the National Science Curriculum for KS1 and 2 and the Early Learning Goals for Reception. These remain unchanged and are as follows:

Early Years including Reception (age 2-5) – Statutory Early Learning Goals

- Physical Development – Health and Self-Care
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness / Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Making Relationships
- Understanding of the World – People and Communities

Key Stage 1 (age 5-7 years) – Statutory Science Curriculum

Year 1 pupils should be taught to:

- Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense (including the correct names of private parts – penis and vulva – for safeguarding reasons)

Year 2 pupils should be taught to:

- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- Describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene

Key Stage 2 (age 7-11 years) – Statutory Science Curriculum

Year 5 pupils should be taught to:

- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age

Year 6 pupils should be taught to:

- Recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

Since Summer term 2021, all primary schools have also had a statutory obligation to deliver Relationships Education and Health Education. From September 2026, this obligation continues under the new 2025 DfE guidance, which sets out updated content that our PSHE curriculum will include (see section 3 below).

3. What's new under the updated RSHE Guidance (statutory from September 2026)

The core aims of Relationships and Health Education remain the same: helping children build healthy relationships, understand their bodies, and stay safe. However, the new guidance updates some existing content and introduces new areas of learning to reflect the world our children are growing up in. Key changes for primary-age pupils include:

- Online safety and wellbeing: a stronger focus on online financial harms (such as gaming, video game monetisation, scams and fraud), age restrictions on online content, and critically engaging with what they see online, including privacy, consent, personal data and location settings.
- Correct anatomical names: within Health Education, pupils will learn the correct names for body parts, including genitalia, reflecting established safeguarding good practice already used by many schools so that children can identify and report signs of abuse.
- Personal safety: new statutory content on recognising and reducing risk, including fire safety and travel safety (for example around water, roads and railways).
- Change and loss: learning on bereavement and grief, recognising that this can cause a range of feelings and that everyone grieves differently.
- Skills alongside knowledge: greater emphasis on communication, assertiveness, expressing needs and boundaries, and managing difficult feelings such as disappointment, frustration and loneliness, including in online contexts.
- Drugs and alcohol: this area now explicitly includes vaping and nicotine addiction.
- Sex Education (Year 6 only, non-statutory): the DfE continues to recommend, but not require, that primary schools teach sex education, and now specifies that this should take place in Year 5 and/or Year 6. Some schools may choose to address image-sharing or online sexual content in late primary if they know it is affecting their pupils; where this happens, teaching will be age-appropriate and sensitive to children with no prior familiarity with the topic.

Much of the existing curriculum stays the same or very similar, including content on families, friendships, keeping safe, first aid, healthy eating, and physical health and fitness.

At Holly Park we also include the non-statutory content: **Living in the Wider World**

- Economic Wellbeing – including financial wellbeing online, identifying and managing financial safety, harms, scams and risks
- Being a Responsible Citizen
- Careers

We have reviewed our curriculum and policies and have updated content.

4. Sex Education – Non-statutory

The Department for Education continues to recommend, but not require, that all primary schools have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. Under the new guidance, this recommendation is specifically for Year 5 and/or Year 6. The school will engage with parents (via a letter and meeting) about the content of the sex education programme before it is taught. It is only the lessons on conception and birth, taught in Year 6 at our school, which are classed as sex education and are therefore separate from Relationships and Health Education. In Year 6, Parents will be invited to a meeting about the sex education aspect of the curriculum. This will be an opportunity to find out how the lessons will be taught, what the content will be and how the class teachers have prepared to deliver the lessons.

5. Parental Right to Withdraw

Parents only have the right to withdraw their child from Sex Education (the small number of lessons taught in Year 6). This right is unchanged under the new guidance.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from lessons on Relationships Education or Health Education, or from the Science Curriculum, which are covered in all other year groups – this includes lessons on puberty, online safety, personal safety, and change and loss.

6. School and Home Working Together

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.

There will be a meeting for parents about PHSE at Holly Park on Friday 2nd October at 9am in the school hall. The meeting will be led by myself and Mrs Mehtar (Assistant Head for personal Development). Please do come along if you would like to find out more or have questions.



Ann Pelham
Headteacher