

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Questions from the Department for Education 2020

The information below was published by the Department for Education about the introduction of compulsory relationships education and RSHE from September 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-RSHE-and-health-education-faqs>

**Q: Will my child's school still have to teach these subjects from September despite the recent disruption?**

A: The subjects will be compulsory from September 2020. Schools that have met the requirements set out in the statutory guidance, for example engaging parents and carers, are encouraged to begin teaching the new curriculum from September 2020. Schools that are not ready to teach the subjects, or are unable to meet the requirements because of the challenging circumstances, should aim to start preparations as soon as possible and begin teaching the new curriculum by at least the start of the summer term 2021.

**Q: Will my child's school have to engage with me before teaching these subjects?**

A: Schools will be required to consult with parents when developing and reviewing their policies for Relationships Education and RSHE, which will inform schools' decisions on when and how certain content is covered. Effective engagement gives the space and time for parents to input, ask questions, share concerns and for the school to decide the way forward. Schools will listen to parents' views, and then make a reasonable decision as to how they wish to proceed.

When and how content is taught is ultimately a decision for the school, and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content. A school's policies for these subjects must be published online and must be available to any individual free of charge. Schools should also ensure that, when they engage parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, for example the books they will use in lessons.

**Q: Does the new Relationships Education and RSHE curriculum take account of my faith?**

The subjects are designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain. In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that topics are appropriately handled. Schools with a religious character can build on the core required content by reflecting their beliefs in their teaching. In developing these subjects, we have worked with a number of representative bodies and faith organisations, representing all the major faith groups in England. Several faith organisations produce teaching materials that schools can choose to use.

***Q: Do I have a right to withdraw my child from Relationships and Sex Education?***

A: Parents will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSHE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 -the legal age of sexual consent. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary or secondary as we believe the contents of these subjects –such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) –are important for all children to be taught.

***Q: Has the government listened to the views of my community in introducing these subjects?***

A: A thorough engagement process, involving a public call for evidence and discussions with over 90 organisations, as well as the public consultation on the draft regulations and guidance, has informed the key decisions on these subjects. The consultation received over 11,000 responses from teachers, schools, expert organisations, young people and parents –these responses have helped finalise the statutory guidance.

***Q: Will my child be taught about LGBT relationships?***

A: Pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. These subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships. Pupils should receive teaching on LGBT content during their school years. Teaching children about the society that we live in and the different types of loving, healthy relationships that exist can be done in a way that respects everyone. Primary schools are strongly encouraged and enabled to cover LGBT content when teaching about different types of families.

Secondary schools should cover LGBT content in their RSHE teaching. RSHE should meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity –this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships in the context of the law.

***Q: What support will schools receive to deliver these subjects well?***

A: We are investing in a central support package to help teachers introduce these subjects well and with confidence. This will include a new online service, featuring access to high quality resources, innovative training materials, case studies and an implementation guide, available from Spring 2020. There will also be training available for teachers through existing regional networks, offering opportunities to improve subject knowledge and build confidence. We're working with expert organisations, schools and teachers to develop this support.

***Where can I find out more information about what will be taught in my child's school?***

If you want to know more about what will be taught as part of the new subjects, the best thing to do is speak to your child's school. We have also published parent guides, which explain what the subjects are, and parents' rights. These subjects are designed to equip your child with

knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life. The important lessons you teach your child about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe, are respected and valued under this new curriculum. Teaching at school will complement and reinforce the lessons you teach your child as they grow up. Your child's school will have flexibility to deliver the content in a way that is age and developmentally appropriate and sensitive to the needs and religious background of its pupils.

## **Questions from Saint Benedict Catholic School Community**

### **Q: Who will be teaching my child the RSHE curriculum?**

A: The RSHE curriculum will be taught across a wide range of subject areas such as Religious Studies, Science, Physical Education, Computer Science and within the new Personal Development curriculum during form time. By accessing this curriculum across a variety of subject areas, we are able to plan for the delivery of specialist topics within the department where the expertise lies, whilst maintaining a familiar face of the form tutor to further explore the topics within RSHE during form time sessions. The curriculum has been planned carefully to create consistency in knowledge from subject specialists where appropriate, whilst providing opportunities for children to explore their own understanding of RSHE in a safe and secure setting within their form tutor.

### **Q: What topics are covered in the curriculum at Saint Benedict?**

A: There is a curriculum map available for parents to see what topics and which departments will deliver these. There is also a complete Personal Development curriculum map available on the website which will provide an overview of the topics covered within tutor time. For more detail regarding the content of these topics, parents can contact the Head of Year in the first instance to ask any specific questions.

### **Q: Who can I contact if I am worried about my child accessing this curriculum?**

A: If you are concerned about this curriculum and how it may impact your child, please contact their Head of Year in the first instance. If your concern extends to their ability to access the curriculum due to any additional needs that they may have, please contact our SENCO to hear how we are planning to support those pupils who find accessing the curriculum more challenging due to their needs.

### **Q: How can I support my child in this aspect of the school curriculum?**

A: the best thing that you do to support your children is to talk them openly about these subjects. Our curriculum is designed to equip your child with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life. The important lessons you teach your child about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe, are respected and valued under this new curriculum. Teaching at school will complement and reinforce the lessons you teach your child as they grow up.

**Q: What do I need to do if I would like to withdraw my child from the sex education aspect of the RSHE curriculum?**

A: Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the specific sex education aspects of the RSHE curriculum. If you wish to exercise this right, please contact your child's Head of Year and they will be able to explain the process to follow to withdraw your child.

**Q: How will my child be taught the curriculum?**

A: Like all other aspects of the curriculum, the RSHE curriculum will be delivered with carefully planned lessons that are built in a sequential manner to allow children to develop knowledge. We will build into our lessons formative assessment and opportunities for pupils to revisit content regularly to support learning. We will follow the same principles of cognitive science within the planning and delivery of this curriculum to mirror the whole school curriculum across all key stages. These will be lessons and pupils will be required to engage and learn in the same manner as all other curriculum areas.

**Q: Where can I find more information about the RSHE Curriculum?**

To access more information regarding the secondary RSHE curriculum please access the guide for parents at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/907640/RSE\\_secondary\\_schools\\_guide\\_for\\_parents.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907640/RSE_secondary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf)

We have more information on our website from the Nottingham Diocese to help provide our parents with more specific information regarding the DFE's RSHE curriculum and how this is implemented within a faith setting such as Saint Benedict Catholic School.