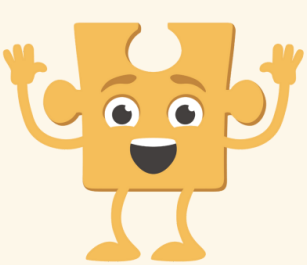
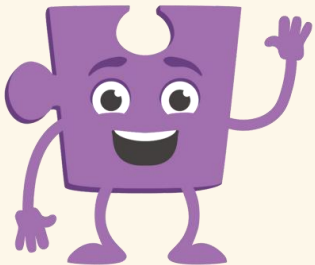
JIGSAW
PSHE 3-11

WHAT DO PRIMARY SCHOOLS HAVE TO TEACH IN PRIMARY RSHE?

A guide for parents

January 2026







Relationships, Sex and Health Education in Primary Schools:

Understanding what your child will learn and why

As parents and carers, you are the most important people in your child's life. You know them best, and the conversations you have at home about relationships, growing up, and staying healthy are important and invaluable for their understanding of themselves and the world around them.

At school, we support this learning through PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education, through which we deliver the DfE's statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) as well as wider curriculum content related to citizenship, financial literacy and other learning about themselves and the wider world. This isn't a new subject – schools have always helped children learn how to stay safe, be kind, and look after themselves. What has changed is that since 2020, Relationships Education and Health Education have become a required part of every primary school's curriculum.

This guide explains what your child will learn, when they'll learn it, and how you can support their learning at home. It also explains your rights as a parent.

Why do children need this education?

Children today are growing up in a complex world. They need age-appropriate knowledge and skills to:

- **Stay safe** – recognising unsafe situations, knowing who to tell, understanding their bodies belong to them
- **Build healthy friendships** – being kind, resolving disagreements, knowing what makes a good friend
- **Look after their physical health** – healthy eating, exercise, sleep, hygiene, and understanding how their bodies change as they grow
- **Look after their mental health** – understanding feelings, building resilience, knowing when and how to ask for help
- **Navigate the online world** – staying safe online, understanding that not everything online is true or kind
- **Understand families** – appreciating that families come in many forms and all are equally valid

This learning helps children thrive now and prepares them for adolescence and adulthood.

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What will my child learn?



Our school uses Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, which also includes all the statutory RSHE and supports us to teach this through six themed units (called "Puzzles") across the year. Here's what your child will learn:

Being Me In My World

Taught at the start of each school year

Your child will learn about rights and responsibilities, classroom rules, and being part of a community. They'll explore what makes them feel safe and special, learn about making good choices, and identify trusted adults they can turn to for help. As children get older, this extends to thinking about citizenship and their place in the wider world.

Celebrating Difference

Taught in the autumn term

Your child will learn that everyone is unique and that differences should be respected and celebrated. This includes learning about different types of families, understanding what bullying is and how to prevent it, and developing empathy for others. Children learn that all families – including those with single parents, same-sex parents, step-parents, grandparents as carers, and many other arrangements – deserve respect.

Dreams and Goals

Taught in the spring term

Your child will learn about setting goals, working hard, and coping when things don't go to plan. They'll develop resilience and learn that success looks different for everyone. This unit also covers how healthy lifestyle choices support this, about teamwork, and in older year groups, topics like managing money safely and understanding that what we see online isn't always reliable.

Healthy Me

Taught in the spring term

Your child will learn how to look after their physical and mental health. This includes healthy eating, exercise, sleep, and hygiene. They'll also learn about staying safe, including road, rail, water and fire safety, and, as they get older, about the effects of smoking, vaping, and alcohol. Mental health and emotional wellbeing are woven throughout.

Relationships

Taught in the summer term

Your child will learn about building positive relationships with family, friends, and others. This includes understanding feelings, recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships, respecting personal boundaries, and as children get older, with a growing focus on considering media messages and staying safe online. The focus is always on kindness, respect, and knowing how to get help if needed.

Changing Me

Taught in the summer term

Your child will learn about how bodies change as we grow, including puberty. This is taught in an age-appropriate way, building year on year. Younger children learn about life cycles and the correct names for body parts. Older children learn about the physical and emotional changes of puberty, including menstruation. Other aspects of change are also taught in this Puzzle, such as changing relationships and changes in families, changing classes and changes related to moving school or house and the vocabulary and strategies that can help us to manage and cope with change.

A note about puberty

Many parents wonder when and how puberty is taught. Our PSHE policy will tell you more about how you can see and discuss the teaching and materials used, but to summarise:

- **It is taught gradually.** Children don't suddenly receive all the information in one lesson. Learning builds year on year, starting with simple concepts about growth and change.
- **Boys and girls learn together.** Everyone benefits from understanding the changes that happen to all bodies. This builds empathy and reduces embarrassment.
- **We use correct terminology.** Using proper names for body parts helps keep children safe and ensures they can communicate clearly if they ever need to report something concerning.
- **It is taught before children need to know.** Puberty starts for most children whilst they are in primary school, and whilst the average age for periods to start is 12, they can begin as early as 8. Children need to understand what's happening to their bodies before it happens, so they feel prepared rather than frightened, and this applies to learning about puberty for boys and girls.

- **Puberty is Health Education, not Sex Education.** This means it is a required part of the curriculum and parents cannot withdraw their children from it.

What about Sex Education?

Sex Education – meaning teaching about how babies are conceived – is **not compulsory** in primary schools. However, the government recommends that primary schools include some age-appropriate content in Years 5 and 6.

If your school chooses to teach Sex Education, **you have the right to withdraw your child** from these specific lessons. The school will inform you before this content is taught and explain how to request withdrawal if you wish.

Important: You cannot withdraw your child from:

- Relationships Education (learning about friendships, families, kindness, staying safe)
- Health Education (learning about physical and mental health, including puberty)
- Science curriculum content about reproduction in plants and animals (which in some schools will include humans).

Understanding your rights

What your child learns	Required by law?	Can I withdraw my child?
Relationships Education	Yes	No
Health Education (including puberty)	Yes	No
Sex Education (conception and birth)	Recommended but not required	Yes
Science (life cycles, reproduction)	Yes	No

Common questions from parents

"Isn't my child too young for this?"

All content is age appropriate. A five-year-old learning about families and friendships is very different from an eleven-year-old learning about puberty. The curriculum is carefully designed to give children the right information at the right time – not too early, not too late.

"Will you teach my child about LGBT+ relationships?"

Children will learn that families come in many forms, including those with same-sex parents. This is presented simply as one of many types of loving family. In Year 3 and above, children learn that some adults are attracted to people of the same sex and some to the opposite sex, in the context of who adults choose to spend their lives with. This is not about sexual activity – it's about helping all children feel their family is valued and ensuring children know why it is not okay to use terms like "gay" as an insult.

"Will you teach my child about being transgender?"

The Jigsaw programme does not explicitly teach about gender identity in primary school but does teach children to question gender stereotypes in line with the DfE Guidance. The focus is on celebrating every child as a unique individual and challenging stereotypes (for example, that only boys can like football or only girls can like pink). If questions arise, teachers will answer sensitively and in line with school policy.

"What if my child asks questions you can't answer?"

Teachers are trained to handle questions sensitively. If a child asks something beyond the lesson content, the teacher may say, "That's a great question to ask your grown-ups at home." We will always let you know if your child has asked something you might want to follow up on.

"What if my child has additional needs?"

The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all learners. If your child has SEND, their teacher will ensure content is accessible and appropriate. Please speak to your child's teacher if you have specific concerns.

"What if this conflicts with our family's beliefs?"

We respect that families have different values and beliefs. The curriculum focuses on facts, safety, and respect for others. It does not tell children what to believe about relationships or family life. We encourage you to share your family's values at home, and we're always happy to discuss any concerns.



How can I support my child's learning at home?

The most important thing you can do is **keep talking**. Children who can talk openly with their parents about bodies, feelings, and relationships are safer and make better choices.

Here are some tips:

- **Use everyday moments.** A TV programme, a news story, or something that happens at school can be a natural starting point for conversation.
- **Answer questions honestly.** If your child asks something, give a simple, truthful answer. If you don't know, it's fine to say, "Let me think about that" or "Let's find out together."
- **Use the correct words.** Using proper names for body parts helps children communicate clearly and reduces shame or embarrassment.
- **Listen more than you talk.** Sometimes children just need to process their thoughts. Ask open questions like, "What do you think about that?"
- **Reassure them.** Let your child know they can always come to you with questions, and that no question is silly or wrong.
- **Don't panic.** If your child says something surprising, stay calm. An open, relaxed response encourages them to keep talking to you.

What if I want to know more?

We want to work in partnership with you. You are always welcome to:

- **View the curriculum materials.** Ask the school office to arrange this.
- **Speak to your child's teacher.** They can explain what's being taught and when.
- **Attend parent information sessions.** We hold these before teaching sensitive content.
- **Talk to the PSHE lead.** They can answer questions about the whole programme.



Key messages to remember

✓ Relationships Education and Health Education are required by law – they help keep your child safe and healthy.

✓ Sex Education (conception and birth) is recommended but not required – you can withdraw your child from these lessons if you wish.

✓ Puberty is part of Health Education, not Sex Education – it is compulsory and taught before children need to know.

✓ All content is age-appropriate – what a Reception child learns is very different from what a Year 6 child learns.

✓ All families are respected – children learn that families come in many forms and all are equally valid.

✓ You are your child's first teacher – the conversations you have at home matter most of all.

Further information

If you have any questions about RSHE at our school, please contact:

Mrs Hussain, PSHE Lead

For more information about the Jigsaw programme, visit: Jigsaw - Leading provider of PSHE & RE education

For the government's guidance for parents, visit: New RSHE guidance: what parents need to know – The Education Hub

This guide is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025).

