



Our Ref: AJC/MS

30 March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

**Re: Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education - Parent and Carer FAQ's**

**Why is there new guidance on Relationships education, Sex education and Health education from the Department of Education?**

The previous guidance was last updated in 2000, and it was felt that it no longer accurately reflected the world in which we live.

The new guidance was finalised and passed into law by Parliament in 2019. It aims to create a curriculum that:

- ❖ fosters pupils' respect for themselves and others;
- ❖ promotes equality and values difference;
- ❖ educates children about positive relationships
- ❖ helps pupils understand how their actions can impact on their health, wellbeing and safety.

The curriculum also aims to meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing identity and family circumstances, and to prepare them for life in modern Britain.

The DfE guidance states " *These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society*"

In our school the curriculum will be delivered through PHSE lessons, although there will be some crossover in other subjects for example in Science and PE.

**When will the new guidance on Relationships Education and Health education be delivered in schools?**

The guidance became statutory in September, although as 'early adopters', we have already been developing our curriculum during the last academic year.

- ❖ all primary schools in England will teach relationships education from September 2020
- ❖ all primary schools in England will teach Health Education from September 2020

## **Will primary schools have to teach sex education? Isn't this too young?**

In most primary schools, sex education (which goes beyond the science curriculum) is already taught, and it is strongly recommended by the government that this continues. In our school, this usually takes place in year 6. All parents will have the opportunity to view a selection of resources that will help explain why and how we propose to teach this part of the curriculum.

## **What has changed from the previous requirements regarding the delivery of sex education?**

There has been no change at all, please refer to our Draft Relationships and Sex Education policy.

## **Who will be delivering sex education teaching?**

The class teacher will usually deliver sex education. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss the content and resources prior to sex education being taught.

## **Does the Department for Education's guidance state exactly what needs to be taught?**

The guidance sets out key learning that children must receive by the end of primary school. All information regarding resources will be detailed in the school policy and parents will have the opportunity to look at a selection of resources in the parents' information webinar.

What are the key themes that will be taught in relationships education in primary school?

- ❖ Families and people who care for me
- ❖ Caring friendships
- ❖ Respectful relationships
- ❖ Online relationships
- ❖ Being Safe

## **What values underpin Relationships Education?**

The core values include:

- ❖ the importance of stable loving relationships
- ❖ respect for all
- ❖ rights, responsibilities and the law
- ❖ equality
- ❖ acceptance of diversity
- ❖ kindness
- ❖ generosity
- ❖ honesty

## **What are the key themes that will be taught in Health Education?**

- ❖ mental wellbeing
- ❖ internet safety and harms
- ❖ physical health and fitness
- ❖ healthy eating
- ❖ drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- ❖ health and prevention

- ❖ basic first aid
- ❖ changing adolescent body

### **Will I be consulted before these subjects are taught?**

Parents will have the opportunity to consult with school while we are developing and reviewing our policies for Relationships Education and Health education. A curriculum outline is available on the school website. Any parents who have questions relating to specific content can email school on [enquiries@pilgrimacademy.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@pilgrimacademy.co.uk).

Government guidance for Relationships and Health education, states that schools must deliver the statutory curriculum content, and parents cannot veto curriculum content in **relationships and health education**, although parents still have the right to remove children from those parts of the curriculum which are defined as sex education as detailed in the school policy.

### **Can I request my child is excused from Relationships Education?**

No. Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from any part of Relationships Education?

### **Can I request my child is excused from Health Education?**

No. Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from Health education. Health education includes the teaching of correct terminology for body parts and learning about the changing adolescent body in a timely way to ensure that they are prepared for changes they will experience before they happen.

### **Can I request my child is excused from the Sex education curriculum?**

Yes. Parents and carers will be able to request that their child is excused from those parts of lessons that are defined as sex education in the school policy. We hope that once you have the opportunity to find out what and how this will be taught, few parents will wish to do this.

Parents and carers should note that the science curriculum includes discussion about human reproduction. Parents cannot excuse their child from any part of the science curriculum, including lessons about reproduction and human development.

### **Can I request my child is excused from lessons about the changing adolescent body and puberty (including periods and wet dreams)?**

No. This is part of Health Education.

### **There have been concerns about the new curriculum being LGBT inclusive. Can I excuse my child from lessons about LGBT people and relationships?**

No. The purpose of the Relationships Education is to educate pupils, age appropriately, about relationships and the diversity in the world they live in. It is important that pupils know that different families and individuals exist within communities and are respected under the law.

LGBT inclusive curriculum is not new, it has been a requirement for all schools under the Equality Act 2010. The new Relationships Education curriculum reinforces this by clarifying that the lessons children receive in school must be inclusive of diverse families and be relevant to all pupils.

Teaching must promote equality and respect, present material that is accurate, balanced and it must be underpinned by legal rights and responsibilities. Content related to LGBT people will be integrated into the curriculum at an age appropriate level.

### **Will family diversity be represented?**

Yes. Families both in school and in the wider world, differ from a child's own family. Pupils will be taught that British society values diversity and that all families deserve respect. Families are characterised by love and care, even though they may be expressed through different traditions and values.

Relationships Education curriculum must allow every child the right to see their family represented and all pupils must be confident and safe to speak about who they live with and who cares for them.

### **What will my role as a parent/ carer be in Relationships Education and Health Education teaching?**

Parent and carers are partners in this important area of education which helps us to keep children safe and support them so that they thrive. We will inform you about what is being taught across each year group so that learning can be supported at home before and after lessons. This gives parents and carers the opportunities to talk about their own values, experiences and perspectives. Government guidance recognises, *"That parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and form healthy relationships."*

### **Will schools teach about a range of relationships, marriage, civil partnerships, relationships outside marriage and same sex relationships?**

Yes. The curriculum enables the children to understand the importance of a stable, secure and loving environment for family life and will include a range of family types that can provide this. Teaching will represent the full range of committed and mutually supportive stable relationships in our society, including religious and civil marriages, civil partnerships and relationships outside of formal commitment. The range of families represented may include step families, same-sex parents, grandparents as parents, adoptive families and more.

### **When will this guidance be reviewed again by the Department of Education?**

The guidance is due to be reviewed in 2022.

Yours faithfully



Mr A J Clark  
Principal