



# RSHE update

Kate Smith, Head of The Healthy Lives Team

*“...children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.”*

*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education -Statutory guidance. Department for Education (2019)*



# DfE review of Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education



The Department for Education (DfE) is currently undertaking a review of Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education. A 12-week national consultation will follow the publication of the draft guidance. The draft guidance is expected imminently.



# What is Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education currently:



## Health Education – By the end of Primary and Secondary

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic First Aid
- The changing adolescent body including puberty

*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers. (2019)*



# What is Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education currently:



Relationships Education - By the end of Primary	Relationships and Sex Education – By the end of Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Families and people who care for me</li><li>▪ Caring friendships</li><li>▪ Respectful relationships</li><li>▪ Online relationships</li><li>▪ Being Safe</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Families</li><li>▪ Respectful relationships including friendships</li><li>▪ Online and media</li><li>▪ Being safe</li><li>▪ Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health</li></ul>

*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers. (2019)*



# Ofsted undertook a review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges, June 2021:



Percentage of girls who experienced sexist name-calling (92 percent)

Percentage being put under pressure to provide sexual images of themselves (80 percent)

Percentage who experienced sexual assault of any kind (79 percent)

Percentage who experienced unwanted touching (64 percent)

Percentage who felt pressured to do sexual things they did not want to (68 percent)



# DfE guidance:



## What did the DfE's 2019 RSHE guidance say about body parts or same sex families?

- “By the end of Primary pupils should know - how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.”
- “By the end of Primary pupils should know - that each person’s body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.”
- “Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.”
- **Source:** [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424242/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_and_Health_Education_guidance.pdf)

## What did the DfE's supplementary RSHE FAQ document (published online in 2020) say about teaching LGBT relationships in Primary Schools?

- “Primary schools are strongly encouraged and enabled to cover LGBT content when teaching about different types of families.”
- **Source:** [Relationships education, relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education: FAQs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424242/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education_RSE_and_health_education_FAQs.pdf)



# Tower Hamlets current RSE advice to schools:



## 1. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) relationships:

“LBTH recommends teaching about LGBT relationships, in the context of different types of families, in the statutory part of the curriculum in Key Stage 1.

Different types of families may include a mum and a dad, single parent families, children raised by grandparents, same sex parents; all families should be respected equally. This is so that children coming from same sex families feel welcomed and included in school, from the very beginning of their school career, in Key Stage 1.

It is also important in terms of tackling homophobic behaviour and bullying and demonstrates LBTH’s commitment to equalities, as outlined in the Equality Act.”

## 2. Naming of the Sexual Body Parts

“LBTH recommends that children are taught in Key Stage 1, in the statutory part of the curriculum, about naming of the sexual body parts as a safeguarding issue. This is so pupils can report abuse if it happens or so that they can accurately report medical symptoms if they are unwell. The more children are able to name these body parts and to know about appropriate and inappropriate touch, the more they are protected from abuse.

The following words are recommended to be taught in Key Stage 1: penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, nipple/breast, and bottom/anus.”

## 3. Puberty

“LBTH also recommends that lessons about puberty begin in Year 4, to prepare all children for puberty and girls for the start of menstruation, before it occurs.”

## 4. Do schools have to follow LBTH advice?

“Schools do not need to follow their local authorities’ advice on these topics. It is ultimately the decision of each individual school’s governing body. The details of how the curriculum is taught and the resources used are entirely down to the school.”





In December 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) published its draft non-statutory guidance for Schools and Colleges on Gender Questioning Children. They are now seeking views, as part of a 12-week consultation for organisations such as schools/colleges and individuals such as governors, parents and students. The consultation closes at 11.59 pm on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Source:** [Gender Questioning Children - non-statutory guidance \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gender-questioning-children-non-statutory-guidance)





# DfE Draft non-statutory guidance on Gender Questioning Children and open consultation



- “There is no general duty to allow a child to ‘social transition’”, “...Some forms of social transition will not be compatible with schools’ and colleges’ statutory responsibilities.”
- “...Requests from younger children in primary schools should be treated with greater caution.”
- “If a child requests a change, schools and colleges should make parents aware of the situation and can point them to support outside the school environment (for example, pastoral or medical support) if they require more information.”
- “Parents should not be excluded from decisions taken by a school or college relating to requests for a child to ‘socially transition’”, “...Other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child.”

Source: [Gender Questioning Children - non-statutory guidance \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/611111/Gender-Questioning-Children-non-statutory-guidance.pdf)





For any further questions, please contact **Kate Smith, Head of the Healthy Lives Team** at **[Kate.Smith@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.Smith@towerhamlets.gov.uk)**

