



Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy (RHSE)

Fairholme Primary School

Reviewed: March 2025

What is Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE)?

RHSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching. RHSE is an integral element of our broader developmental personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum.

Children are naturally curious about growing up, how their bodies work and how humans reproduce. Their questions need to be answered honestly, using language and explanations appropriate for their age and maturity, thus avoiding unnecessary mystery, confusion, embarrassment and shame.

RHSE addresses the questions and concerns raised by the biological facts – for example, exploring the feelings a new baby can bring, or the effect of puberty on friendships. It provides balance to sometimes distorted messages about sex and gender roles in the media, and helps protect children by explaining boundaries and safety, and developing the language and understanding needed to recognise abusive behaviour and seek help. It also helps pupils to develop respectful and consensual attitudes and behaviours.

RHSE is taught within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked after children or young carers).

Aims

Our PSHE curriculum is a fundamental part of our ethos and learning at Fairholme Primary School, and includes all learning objectives relating to RHSE. Through PSHE, we explicitly teach our school values of **respect, responsibility, honesty, kindness, self-belief and aspiration**. We aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. In providing children with an understanding of healthy and respectful relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider effective RHSE to be a fundamental part of our approach to supporting pupils to grow into confident, caring, responsible and respectful young citizens. The purpose of RHSE is to help children and young people to be safe, healthy and happy as they grow up and in their future lives. RHSE must always be appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development and is an essential part of safeguarding.

Through relationships, health and sex education lessons, we aim to:

- Prepare pupils for puberty, giving them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Give pupils an understanding of reproduction and sexual development
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Help children to understand the characteristics of positive relationships, consent and keeping themselves safe

- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Provide pupils with knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to make positive and healthy choices concerning relationships as they grow up and deal with risk
- Develop positive, inclusive and respectful attitudes and values
- Be inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- Combat exploitation
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place, and encourage partnership between home and school in discussing these matters

RHSE is taught through the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum. In addition, some aspects of the RHSE programme will be covered through science, computing, circle times, assemblies, stories and PE (in the context of health and hygiene).

Statutory requirements

The school follows the statutory guidance set down by the DfE in [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education - Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers](#) (published 2019).

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and provide that pupils receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education, pupils receiving secondary education must be taught RSE and that all primary and secondary pupils must be taught Health Education. The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. This includes pupil referral units, maintained special schools, special academies, and non-maintained special schools. All schools, except independent schools, must make provision for Health Education.

What is taught in relationships education?

Relationships education means teaching pupils about safe and healthy relationships, including:

- Family and friends
- Being safe in public
- Being safe online
- How to recognise unsafe relationships
- How to get help

What is taught in health education?

Health education is about good physical health and mental well-being. It includes:

- How to deal with emotions
- Healthy eating and fitness
- The physical and emotional changes of puberty, including the menstrual cycle

What is taught in sex education lessons?

Sex education lessons prepare boys and girls for the changes that adolescences brings and draw on knowledge set out in science lessons to explain how a baby is conceived (including sexual intercourse, other fertility treatments, surrogacy and adoption) and contraception. These elements are not compulsory, and parents/carers may choose to withdraw children from these lessons.

However, lessons about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to 11, including physical and emotional changes, as well as teaching about menstruation and periods, form part of compulsory health education expectations. The make-up of different families, adoption and different types of relationships (including LGBT) are also covered in compulsory relationships education. Human reproduction is taught through compulsory science curriculum objectives.

Effective sex and relationship education does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. It builds up knowledge and skills which are particularly important today because of the many different and conflicting pressures on young people.

We recognise that sex education is not compulsory in primary schools; however, we have decided to cover some aspects of sex education to meet the needs of pupils and prepare them for the transition to secondary school, and because we are aware that there is a high rate of teenage pregnancy in the local area. We believe we have an important part to play in helping children understand the responsibilities that come with parenthood, and for all these reasons we discourage parents/carers from withdrawing children from sex education lessons.

At Fairholme Primary School, primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings (compulsory, taught from Year 4 onwards)
- Human reproduction (compulsory in the science curriculum, taught from Year 4 onwards)
- How a baby is conceived and born, that conception is when a sperm and egg meet, that conception usually occurs as a result of sexual intercourse, and what sexual intercourse means (taught partly in Years 5 and mostly in Year 6 - parents/guardians may choose to withdraw their child from this after discussion with senior staff)
- That there are ways to prevent a baby being made (taught in Year 6 - parents/guardians may choose to withdraw their child from this after discussion with senior staff)

Progression

RHSE lessons help pupils to learn progressively as they mature and revisit the subject on a regular basis, to reinforce learning and provide opportunities to ask further questions.

Age 3–6

At this age children are interested in the differences between boys and girls, naming body parts, where babies come from, friends and family. What areas of the body are private and should not be touched and who they can talk to if they are worried are also important.

Age 7–8

At this age children are interested in the emotional and physical changes of growing up, similarities and differences between each other and between boys and girls, coping with strong emotions and how babies are made from eggs and sperm. How to look after our bodies and how to be safe and healthy are also important.

Age 9–10

At this age children are interested in knowing about love and the different kinds of families and will be more aware of different types of partnerships and relationships. Gender

stereotypes and homophobia can be explained and challenged. They will be curious about puberty and sexual feelings and changing body image. They will want more details about conception, how babies develop and are born and why families are important for having babies. They will also want to know who they can talk to if they want help or advice and information about growing up and personal safety including online.

Curriculum

All objectives for RHSE are woven into our PSHE curriculum, a copy of which is available from the school. We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age, needs, feelings and maturity of pupils. If children ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an age-appropriate manner so that children are fully informed and are discouraged from seeking answers from unmonitored or potentially incorrect sources, such as by searching online.

Key objectives from the statutory [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education - Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers](#) (DfE 2019) are provided in the appendices to this policy.

Teaching strategies

Lessons are taught by class teachers, or another school adult, with whom the children are familiar and with whom they have established a positive, trusting and safe relationship. Teachers may also be supported by members of the wider community such as health professionals (e.g. school nurse), social workers or youth support services. If external visitors contribute to RHSE lessons, they are selected because they have the right skills and experience to make a unique contribution and add value. An external visitor is not used as a substitute for a teacher.

Adults work hard to create an emotionally safe and secure learning environment, where children feel able to discuss sensitive subjects and ask questions.

During lessons, teachers establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting, including setting clear ground rules, for example:

- no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question;
- no one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- everyone's contribution will be respected;
- only the correct names for body parts will be used; and
- meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way

Pupils may suggest confidentiality as part of the ground rules, proposing that 'what is said in the class should stay in the class'. In reality this is not feasible. Instead, we talk to pupils about personal boundaries, what information is private and how to protect their own and others' privacy.

Through RHSE lessons, questions and discussions may well touch on subjects that are close to the children's own experiences, some of which could potentially be upsetting or disconcerting. Teachers ensure that topics and issues that are taught and depersonalised.

It is important children feel able to ask questions during RHSE lessons, and teachers encourage all questions through a range of different opportunities – this will include opportunities for anonymous questions (e.g. Ask-it basket or questions box in which children can submit questions in writing) as well as ensuring children understand that no questions are wrong or invalid. However, questions that are specifically personal, whilst addressed

sensitively, will not be answered. If staff are faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, techniques such as distancing, the use of a questions box or creating a time to talk to a child individually will be used. Where teachers are unsure about an answer to a question, it is important that they acknowledge this and may suggest researching this further at a later point. Children may also be signposted back to parents/carers, in which case the teacher will contact the parents/carers to give a context to the conversations that have been held in class. If any questions raise safeguarding concerns, staff will discuss these with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Throughout RHSE lessons, we encourage adults and children to use correct vocabulary. RHSE has a vital role to play in helping children develop a vocabulary they can use to communicate comfortably, respectfully and accurately about the human body, growing up, sex and relationships. It is good practice to use medically correct terms for genitalia and sexual parts of the body, for example vulva, vagina, penis and testicles. Teachers may choose to plan vocabulary lists for each lesson or unit of RHSE and may also share the list with parents in advance of teaching. The use of respectful language which challenges sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice is essential.

Vocabulary used during RHSE lessons in Years 5 and 6 may include:

puberty, larynx, hormones, pubic hair, urethra, vagina, uterus, cervix, ovaries, fallopian tubes, ejaculation, ejaculate, semen, nipples, penis, scrotum, testicles, foreskin, sperm, anus, clitoris, breasts, Adam's Apple, erection, bra, sanitary protection, sanitary towels, tampons, reproduction, pregnant/pregnancy, sexual intercourse, embryo, foetus, womb, navel, amniotic sac, breech birth, Caesarean birth, umbilical cord, placenta, after-birth, genitalia/gentials, inner lips (labia minora) outer lips (labia majora), safe secret, trusted adult, unsafe secret, vulva, Female Genital Mutilation, celibacy, rape, virgin, contraception, ovum, masturbation.

In all year groups, nicknames may be used in the first instance to clarify and support the teaching and learning process, especially to teach children about appropriate, respectful language.

Lessons are normally taught in mixed gender groups, though some content is covered in single sex groups - e.g. menstrual hygiene, single sex question sessions, etc.

Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RHSE is taught consistently and effectively across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RHSE. The Headteacher also ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

All staff are responsible for:

- delivering RHSE curriculum in a sensitive way;
- modelling positive, respectful and inclusive attitudes to RHSE;
- responding to the needs of individual pupils;
- ensuring parents are notified in advance, usually by letter, when non-statutory RHSE objectives will be taught;
- responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RHSE, and providing appropriate alternative learning;
- monitoring progress.

RHSE lessons are taught by class teachers at Fairholme Primary School.

Parents and carers play the most important part in developing children's understanding of RHSE. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children at our school, through mutual trust, understanding and cooperation.

- The school will consult with parents, carers and governors on the contents of this policy.
- Staff will be available to answer questions parents/carers may have about RHSE, and will inform parents/carers in advance of teaching non-statutory sex education curriculum objectives

Parent/guardian right to withdraw

Relationships and Health Education are compulsory in the primary curriculum. Parents/carers cannot withdraw children from relationships and health education, nor from the elements of the science curriculum which cover human reproduction. Children may be withdrawn from sex education lessons if requested in writing and discussed with a member of staff. Further details of what is covered in sex education lessons has been provided above. Detailed, compulsory relationships and health education objectives are provided in the appendices, taken from [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education - Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers](#) (DfE 2019). For reasons provided above, we do discourage parents/carers from withdrawing children from sex education lessons, and staff will discuss the possible negative experiences or feelings that may result from withdrawal of a child and ways in which these may be minimised. However, where children are withdrawn, alternative work will be provided and children will be sent to other classrooms during those sessions.

Confidentiality

If a child discloses concerning information, including being the victim of abuse or exploitation, or being involved in any form of sexual activity, staff will take the matter seriously and follow procedures outlined in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Any disclosures of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police, either by the teacher to whom it is disclosed or by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. We aim to ensure that pupils' best interests are maintained and try to encourage pupils to talk to their parents or carers to provide support.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Pupils with SEN will be given the opportunity to fully participate in RHSE lessons and a differentiated program will be provided where necessary, to ensure that all pupils gain a full understanding.

Equalities and diversity

Planning and resources are regularly reviewed to ensure they comply with equalities legislation and the school's equal opportunities policy. All RHSE lessons are taught without bias and in line with legal responsibilities such as those contained within the Equalities Act. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to come to their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions.

We teach children to value and celebrate religions, ethnic and culture diversity as part of modern Britain and promote British Values. We explore different cultural beliefs and values

and encourage activities that challenge stereotypes and discrimination, and present children with accurate information based on the law. We use a range of teaching materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our community and encourage a sense of inclusiveness. We not use RHSE lessons as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

Other relevant policies

There are elements of RHSE which relate to many aspects of school life and this RHSE policy should be read in conjunction with, amongst others:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equalities Policy
- School values document
- School Code Of Conduct
- British Values

APPENDICES

- 1) 'Our school is committed to relationships and sex education which:' - 12 points explaining what is needed for good quality RHSE based on research and evidence.
- 2) Definitions for Relationships and Sex Education published by the Sex Education Forum
- 3) Books to support Relationships, Health and Sex Education
- 4) Statutory curriculum objectives for Relationships Education
- 5) Statutory curriculum objectives for Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing
- 6) Statutory National Curriculum objectives for science which link to RHSE

Our school is committed to relationships and sex education, which:

1.

Is an identifiable part of our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the Key Stages

2.

Is taught by staff regularly trained in RSE and PSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme where appropriate)

3.

Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and about how they can contribute at home

4.

Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills

5.

Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion

6.

Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online

7.

Gives a positive view of human sexuality, with honest and medically accurate information, so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity

9.

Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the school nurse and other health and advice services, including reliable information online

10.

Fosters gender equality and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in RSE lessons and in every-day school life

8.

Gives pupils opportunities to reflect on values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex, and nurtures respect for different views

11.

Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences - including those with special educational needs and disabilities

12.

Seeks pupils' views about RSE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change

Notes

These 12 points explain what is needed for good quality RSE. This is based on research evidence and is supported by a wide range of organisations. The purpose of RSE is to help children and young people to be safe, healthy and happy as they grow up and in their future lives. RSE must always be appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development and is an essential part of safeguarding. The law requires that, from September 2018, relationships and sex education (RSE) is taught in all secondary schools in England, and that relationships education is taught in all primary schools in England. In addition, National Curriculum Science* (*which is taught in maintained schools) includes some elements of sex education.

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Definitions for Relationships and Sex Education

Legislation passed in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires that all primary schools in England provide Relationships Education and all secondary schools provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). In addition, Health Education will be mandatory in all state-funded primary and secondary schools. Primary schools are encouraged, but not mandated to provide sex education.

The legislation gives parents a right to request to excuse their child from sex education in primary and secondary school, but not from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents cannot withdraw children from science. Maintained schools must follow National Curriculum Science.

Statutory guidance on Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (RSHE) (2019) requires that all schools must have a policy on Relationships Education and RSE, stating that within their policy schools should:

- Define Relationships Education (primary)
- Define any sex education they choose to teach other

than that covered in the science curriculum (primary)

- Define RSE (secondary)

Schools therefore need to be able to draw a line between Relationships Education and sex education in order to implement the parental right to request their child is excused from sex education.

Government guidance does not provide a definition for sex education, Relationships education, RSE or Health Education. Statutory guidance sets out content for primary Relationships Education in a series of tables listing what pupils should know 'by the end of primary'. There is no equivalent for sex education content. There is reference to sex education in primary schools in paragraph 67, which refers to sex education as including how a baby is conceived and born:

'The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science – how a baby is conceived and born'. (paragraph 67, statutory guidance on RSHE, 2019)'

Content for secondary RSE is set out in tables listing what pupils should know 'by the end of secondary'. This is a combined subject with no separate heading for sex education, but one section of the table is focused on intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health.



Working together for quality relationships and sex education

TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS IN NAVIGATING DEFINITIONS THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES:

- A table exploring what may constitute sex education and where this content might be placed in the curriculum
- Some principles for how to approach definitions
- Sample definitions of Relationships Education and sex education

"The legislation gives parents a right to request to excuse their child from sex education in primary and secondary school, but not from Relationships Education or Health Education."

Table 1: Teaching points that might be considered to be

| Curriculum | Notes on statutory content and placing this learning in the curriculum | Main subject location(s) | Phase to introduce |
|--|--|---|--------------------|
| Naming main external body parts (including correct terms for genitalia) | <p>Naming main external body parts is in Year 1 National Curriculum Science. The science programme of study does not list parts of the body to teach and does not prohibit teaching any parts.</p> <p>The structure and function of the male and reproductive organs are covered in more detail (internal and external) in National Curriculum Science Key Stage 3.</p> <p>Naming genitalia will also be part of learning about changing adolescent body under Health Education.</p> | <p>Science</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Health Education</p> | Primary |
| Learning about privacy of genitalia. | This is safeguarding and also compatible with the interpretation of Relationships education. | Relationships Education | Primary |
| <p>Sexual reproduction in humans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sperm and egg needed to make a baby - Conception, including IVF - Sexual intercourse - Birth | <p>This can be covered in science, building on a sequence of learning in science about reproduction. However, National Curriculum Science treats human reproduction as optional content when covering sexual reproduction in animals.</p> <p>When learning about human sexual reproduction in science pupils might also be given context – see below.</p> | <p>Science</p> <p>And / or</p> <p>Sex education</p> | Primary |
| <p>Context of human sexual reproduction and sexual intercourse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reproduction is adult; requires physical and emotional maturity, - Legal age of consent to sex | <p>This context can be covered to some extent whether human reproduction is taught in science or as part of sex education.</p> <p>Relationships Education includes that pupils should know: 'that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability'.</p> | <p>Science</p> <p>And / or</p> <p>Sex education</p> | Primary |

| Curriculum | Notes on statutory content and placing this learning in the curriculum | Main subject location(s) | Phase to introduce |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Contraception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Types of contraception and how it works | <p>'The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available' is under secondary RSE subheading 'intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health'.</p> <p>Covered in National Curriculum Science: Key Stage 4 science includes 'hormones in human reproduction, hormonal and non-hormonal methods of contraception'.</p> <p>Note: Contraception can be used for medical reasons separate from preventing conception, and this could come up as part of Health Education in relation to changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.</p> | <p>Sex Education</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Health education</p> | <p>Secondary, though basic concept can be explained at primary.</p> |
| <p>Sexually Transmitted Infections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transmission - Prevention including safer sex - Testing | <p>STIs are part of secondary RSE subheading 'intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health', which covers transmission, prevention, safer sex and testing.</p> <p>STIs are included in National Curriculum Science at Key Stage 4 ('communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in human including HIV/AIDS').</p> <p>STIs could be covered as part of Health Education, where it would be more likely that STIs are given as examples of bacteria and viruses as part of secondary Health Education: 'about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics'.</p> | <p>Sex Education</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Health education</p> | <p>Secondary, though basic concept can be explained at primary.</p> |
| <p>Human sexual response and sexual feelings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What happens physically e.g. increased heart-rate, pupils dilate, how erections occur, production of vaginal mucus as part of sexual response, hormones, sexual attraction - Orgasm, sexual pleasure - Masturbation - Managing sexual feelings and sexual desires, which cannot always be acted on | <p>Not specifically covered in Government RSHE guidance.</p> <p>Aspects of human sexual response relate to human sexual reproduction, which may be covered in secondary science which includes 'the structure and function of the male and female reproductive organs' at Key Stage 3.</p> <p>Aspects of human sexual response are likely to be touched on as part of puberty under Health Education, 'changing adolescent body'.</p> | <p>Sex Education</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Health education</p> | <p>Secondary, though basic concepts such as what it feels like to fancy someone and that masturbation begins during puberty for many people might be covered at primary</p> |

| Curriculum | Notes on statutory content and placing this learning in the curriculum | Main subject location(s) | Phase to introduce |
|--|--|--|--|
| Human sexuality, sexual identity, including sexual orientation. | This is an overarching concept to support secondary sex education. Government guidance expects that LGBT content is integrated and that LGBT is covered in secondary. | Sex education, but with some natural overlap with Relationships Education. | Secondary, though concepts such as what it feels like to fancy someone can be covered at primary and must be taught inclusively. |
| Choices relating to sex - why people have sex - influences on having sex - sexual competencies (communication with partner, readiness, safer sex) | There are several references to understanding choices relating to sex under secondary RSE sub-section: 'intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health'. | Sex education but with some natural overlap with Relationships Education e.g. | Secondary |
| Definitions of sex and the law: - What is sex - What are sexual activities - Sexual consent - Sex and the law | Secondary RSE includes sexual consent under 'Being safe', both definitions: 'the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent', and consent in relationships: 'how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)'. It is important that pupils have sufficient information to define sex and sexual activities to understand sex and the law. | Sex education but with some natural overlap with Relationships Education e.g. 'how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others'. | Secondary, but some aspects of the law need to be covered at primary sufficient that children understand that there are laws relating to sex, and rules about our bodies – see Relationships Education 'Being Safe'. |
| Pornography | Secondary RSE includes under 'Online and media', pupils should know 'that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours...' | Sex education but with some natural overlap with Relationships Education. | Secondary, but at primary pupils need to know basic rules re seeking help from an adult if they encounter images or videos of people naked online. |

PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDED APPROACHES TO DEFINING SEX EDUCATION

1. Transparency

Transparency about the curriculum is essential. Expanding other curriculum subjects for the purpose of containing sex education and reducing sex education that would be subject to the parent right to request their child is excused could be said to lack transparency. However, providing the science, health, safeguarding and relationships context to sex education is very important. It is therefore important to be fully transparent about wherever sex education content is placed.

2. Accept the overlapping nature of content

Pupils will not see boundaries between science, health, safeguarding, relationships and sex. Children and young people are naturally curious and will ask questions that flow from any line of inquiry. It is important to accept that there is a natural overlap between subjects. Schools will want to manage this so that they can support parents wishing to withdraw from sex education, but must not feel they will have done wrong in allowing connections to be made between related content.

3. Safeguarding

Pupils need basic knowledge about the privacy of their bodies and genitalia in particular to support safeguarding. Schools may choose to adopt a school-wide policy on consistent use of correct terms for genitalia as part of safeguarding practice. This is not sex education.

4. Learning about the law

Pupils need to gain an understanding that a range of sexual activities is subject to laws on sexual consent. Too often, children have not recognised sexual abuse has taken place until they begin secondary sex education. It may be useful for schools to highlight where they are specifically teaching about the law relating to sex.

5. Science

Knowledge of the human life cycle is important as a foundation for understanding growth from baby

to child through to puberty and sexual maturity. Learning that some animals reproduce sexually is covered in National Curriculum Science at Key Stage 2, and human sexual reproduction can optionally be included here. There is no statutory requirement to define sex education taught within science, but being clear about the approach taken in a school supports transparency.

6. Emphasise the child's right to sex education

Children have a right to education about human sexuality, reproductive health and rights. If this is not provided by the school it is helpful to emphasise that this right still needs to be met.

7. Be clear about research evidence

Sex education does not result in earlier sex, the opposite is true. Reassurance may be needed around this.

8. Aim to minimise withdrawal and maximise understanding and support

Overall, the aim is to minimise parental withdrawal from school sex education, and maximise parental understanding of school curriculum and parental participation in their child's education. Transparency around how schools approach sex education can support this. Once sex education is defined and specific lessons identified that contain sex education schools could discuss with parents that they could withdraw their child from part rather than all of sex education.

9. Aims and values

Engagement with parents, pupils and staff can help schools to identify their aims for sex education, Relationships Education and RSE, which should be aligned with the school ethos. This may include finding shared values, such as wanting to take a positive view of human sexuality.

10. Explore options for which teaching resources are used in sex education and explain how concepts are taught

Choices about resources are important and can result in higher levels of participation in sex education. It can be helpful to demonstrate how resources are used in practice as this may dispel concerns about what sex education involves in the classroom.

MODEL DEFINITIONS

Statutory guidance requires that all schools have a written policy for Relationships Education and RSE. The notes and model definitions provided here originate from the Sex Education Forum and can be adapted for individual schools.

Sex Education

Sex education is learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health.*

Additional statements could be provided by the school, adapting from the examples below:

**Aspects of sex education are covered in the context of learning about lifecycles (in science). When learning about infections and their prevention (in Health Education) there may be reference to sexually transmitted infections.*

**To safeguard pupils, factual information about the law relating to, for example, rights to access sexual health services, will be provided to pupils. [school to consider how / when this information is provided, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education].*

Relationships education

Primary

Relationships education is learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, family life and relationships with other children and adults. Relationships education supports children to be safe, happy and healthy in their interactions with others now and in the future.

Secondary

Relationships education is learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. Relationships education supports children to be safe, happy and healthy in their interactions with others now and in the future.

Subject integration

In our school we take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.

Note: Primary schools in particular may want to highlight an example of integration, or connections made

between Relationships Education and sex education, for example, when teaching about how a baby is born to also discuss the care that families give to babies.

Relationships and sex education – combined definition currently used by Sex Education Forum

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

About the Sex Education Forum

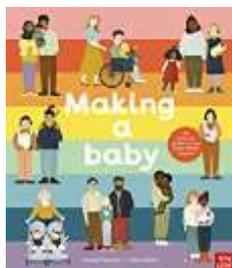
The Sex Education Forum is the leading national authority on RSE, founded in 1987 and part of the National Children's Bureau (NCB) family.

Our work is based on ten evidence-based principles for good quality RSE.

We regularly consult young people about RSE and continually support schools to develop their RSE practice through training and a nationwide network of members who receive regular bulletins and access resources via our website.

Books to support Relationships, Health and Sex Education

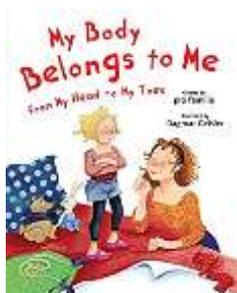
Below is a selection of books that we use to support Relationships, Health and Sex Education in school, or which have been recommended to us by families who have used them with their children.



Making a Baby by Rachel Greener and Clare Owen

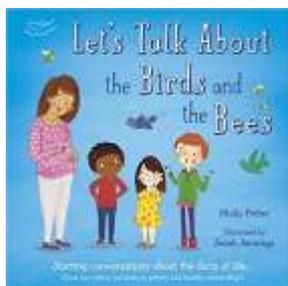
In this honest, accessible illustrated guide to how babies are made, young readers can find out exactly what is needed to grow a baby, from introducing the basic building blocks of life such as sperm and eggs, to explaining the different ways that these building blocks can be put together to create a family. This inclusive guide to Making a Baby covers sex, sperm and egg donation, IUI, IVF, surrogacy and adoption, as well as explaining how a baby grows in the womb and about different kinds of

births including c-sections.



My Body Belongs to Me from My Head to My Toes

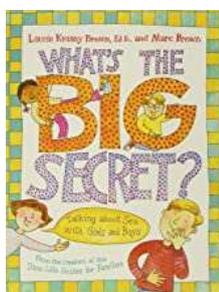
As a child, there are constantly people trying to pick you up, hug you, or tickle you. Sometimes, though, children fall victims to people who try to touch them inappropriately. But how do you tell someone, most likely an adult, that you don't want to be touched? Or, if it has already happened, how do you tell an adult you trust about what happened? You're only a child, and they're the adults. Why would they believe you?



Let's Talk About the Birds and the Bees: Starting conversations about the facts of life (From how babies are made to puberty and healthy relationships) by Molly Potter

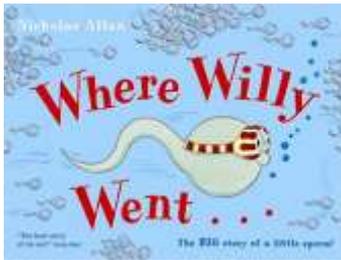
It's natural for young children to have questions about their bodies and where they came from, but it can seem a daunting task to answer honestly so that they understand the subtleties of puberty, sex, reproduction and relationships, and are comfortable with their bodies.

This book uses clear, easy to understand language to answer complex questions about sex and relationships, and covers all manner of tricky subjects from puberty to consent with delicate accuracy and honesty.



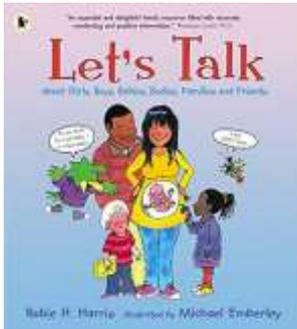
What's the Big Secret? Talking about Sex with Girls and Boys by Laurie Krasny Brown

Are boys and girls different on the inside? How do you tell girls and boys apart? Do girls and boys have the same feelings? Is sex a dirty word? Where do babies come from? What does being pregnant mean? How do you get a belly button? Tell me about when I was a baby... Simple, straightforward and age-appropriate answers to children's most common questions about sex, the human body, reproduction and development.



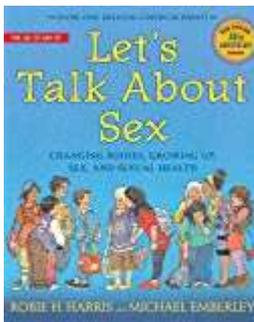
Where Willy Went by Nicholas Allan

Willy is a little sperm who lives inside Mr Browne. The trouble is, Willy is one of 300 million sperm and they all want the same prize - an egg. It's lucky Willy is such a good swimmer. Hilariously funny, warm, endearing and totally non-threatening - this small masterpiece presents the facts of life to young children in a unique but totally accessible way. A Godsend for any parent faced with awkward questions.



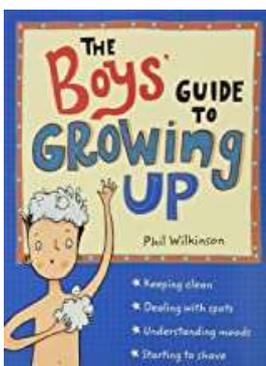
Let's Talk About Girls, Boys, Babies, Bodies, Families and Friends by Robie H. Harris

Young children ask so many questions about their bodies and how they were made. With lively language, engaging art and clear, accurate information, this book answers those perfectly normal questions and will help even pre-school children feel proud and comfortable about their own bodies.



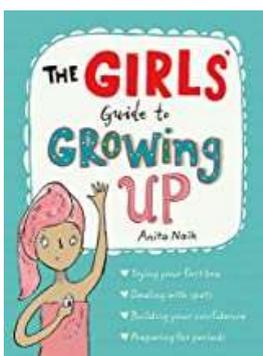
Let's Talk About Sex by Robie H. Harris

Now with expanded information on internet and texting safety, birth control, LGBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) issues and more. Providing accurate and up-to-date information to answer young people's concerns and questions, from conception and puberty to birth control and AIDS, it offers everything they need – now more than ever – to make responsible decisions and stay healthy.



The Boys' Guide To Growing Up by Phil Wilkinson

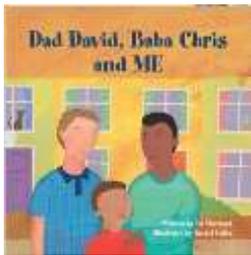
A friendly, reassuring positive guide for boys as they approach puberty, explaining the changes that will happen to their bodies as they grow up and how these changes might make them feel. Covering everything from body hair and vocal changes to mood swings and self-esteem, puberty and addresses any worries that boys might have relating to what is 'normal'. He reassures readers and boosts their confidence, encouraging them to feel positive about the changes they will experience as they go through puberty. The book also includes lifestyle advice on topics like healthy eating and exercise, as well as information on how puberty affects girls.



The Girls' Guide To Growing Up by Anita Naik

A friendly, reassuring and positive guide for girls as they approach puberty, explaining the changes that will happen to their bodies as they grow up and how these changes might make them feel. Covering everything from periods and breast development to body hair and personal hygiene, puberty and parenting expert Anita Naik addresses any worries that girls may have relating to what is 'normal'. She reassures readers and boosts their confidence, encouraging them to feel positive about the changes they will experience as they go through

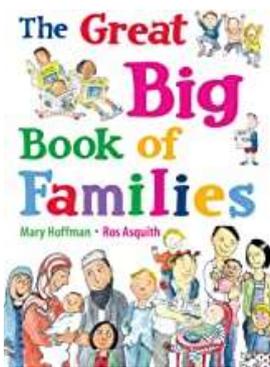
puberty. The book also includes lifestyle advice on topics like healthy eating and exercise, and information on how puberty affects boys.



Dad David, Baba Chris and Me by Ed Merchant

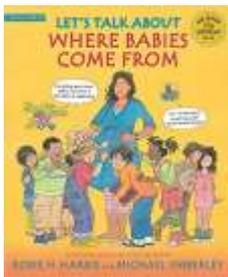
This book for children aged 5-10 years old tells Ben's story about his ordinary life. Ben was adopted by his gay parents Dad David and Baba Chris when he was four years old, and they live happily together in an ordinary house, on an ordinary street and do ordinary things. Dad David, Baba Chris and ME helps to explain the diversity and difference of family groups, and encourages an understanding and appreciation of same-

sex parents



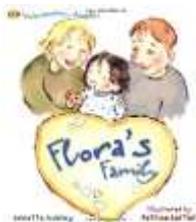
The Great Big Book of Families

What is a family? Once, it was said to be a father, mother, boy, girl, cat and dog living in a house with a garden. But as times have changed, families have changed too, and now there are almost as many kinds of families as colours of the rainbow - from a mum and dad or single parent to two mums or two dads, from a mixed-race family to children with different mums and dads, to families with a disabled member. This is a fresh, optimistic look through children's eyes at today's wide variety of family life: from homes, food, ways of celebrating, schools and holidays to getting around, jobs and housework, from extended families, languages and hobbies to pets and family trees.



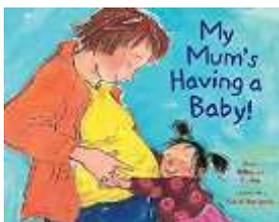
Let's Talk About Where Babies Come From by Robie H. Harris

This clear, lively information book about sex and reproduction covers all the main areas: babies, reproduction, bodies, chromosomes, genes, growing up, love, health and lots more. As before, the information is imparted simply and reassuringly with humorous commentary from an inquisitive bird and a squeamish bee and very friendly full-colour cartoon-strip illustrations.



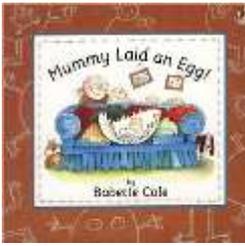
Understanding... Flora's Family by Annette Aubrey

Explore with your child the issue of adoption as Flora's mum and dad explain to her how she became part of their family.



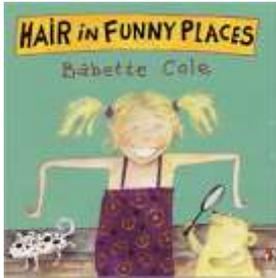
My Mum's Having a Baby by Dori Hillestad Butler

A reassuring introduction for young children about the birth of a baby.



Mummy Laid An Egg by Babette Cole

Just how are babies made? Erm Well. . . they're delivered by dinosaurs squigged out of tubes and found under stones! In this story the kids put their embarrassed parents straight and dispel the myths surrounding baby-making, growth and birth. Babette Cole careers through the facts of life with her no-nonsense text and funny illustrations.



Hair In Funny Places by Babette Cole

Girls and boys are always curious and sometimes even alarmed by the behaviour of their bodies as they grow up. Puberty being a particularly unsettling time. The text takes the form of a conversation between a small girl and her teddy bear, and is ingenious and funny. It is the behaviour of Mr and Mrs Hormone (wonderfully depicted) which is responsible for and plays havoc with the physical and emotional states of girls and boys throughout puberty.

Relationships Education

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Families and people who care for me | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.• The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.• That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.• That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.• That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.• How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed. |
| Caring friendships | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.• The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.• That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.• That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.• How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed. |
| Respectful relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.• The conventions of courtesy and manners.• The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults. |
| Online relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. • How information and data is shared and used online. |
| Being safe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources. |

These objectives are taken from [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education - Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers](#) (DfE 2019) and are compulsory.

Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

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| Mental wellbeing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.• That there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.• How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.• How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.• The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.• Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.• Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.• That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.• Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).• It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough. |
| Internet safety and harms | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.• About the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.• How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.• Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.• That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.• How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.• Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online. |

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| Physical health and fitness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. • The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise. • The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity). • How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health. |
| Healthy eating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content). • The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. • The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health). |
| Drugs, alcohol and tobacco | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking. |
| Health and prevention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. • About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. • About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. • About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing. • The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination |
| Basic first aid | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary. • Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries. |
| Changing adolescent body | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. • About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle. |

These objectives are taken from [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education - Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers](#) (DfE 2019) and are compulsory.

National Curriculum Science (compulsory)

These objectives are contained in the National Curriculum for Science (2014) and are compulsory in each year group. Links will be made to these science objectives wherever relevant in RHSE lessons.

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| Year 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify and name a variety of common animals including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals• identify and name a variety of common animals that are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores• describe and compare the structure of a variety of common animals (fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, including pets)• identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense |
| Year 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults• find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food and air)• describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene |
| Year 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify that animals, including humans, need the right types and amount of nutrition, and that they cannot make their own food; they get nutrition from what they eat• identify that humans and some other animals have skeletons and muscles for support, protection and movement |
| Year 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe the simple functions of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans• identify the different types of teeth in humans and their simple functions• construct and interpret a variety of food chains, identifying producers, predators and prey |
| Year 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird• describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals• describe the changes as humans develop to old age |
| Year 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify and name the main parts of the human circulatory system, and describe the functions of the heart, blood vessels and blood• recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function• describe the ways in which nutrients and water are transported within animals, including humans |