

**Newham Together - the best place  
for Children and Young People**

## Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

RSHE is most effective when it is taught by trained professionals in regular sessions, is embedded into school policy and involves the input of young people and their families. (Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology, 2018)



### Secondary Factsheet



From September 2020 it is statutory for all primary schools to teach Relationships and Health Education (RHE) and all secondary schools teach Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE).

Everyone has a part to play in ensuring children and young people live in communities where being happy, healthy and safe happens. Newham has long been a place that values diversity and promotes inclusion.

The different communities that call Newham home make it a very special place to live, grow, work and study. Schools can ensure children and young people have a better understanding of physical and mental health, relationships and sex, as well as having knowledge of what is appropriate and inappropriate.

Children and young people need to have the confidence to be themselves and to seek help when needed.

**“We believe high quality, inclusive and respectful RSHE will equip our young people for life and support them to be happy, healthy and safe.**

**We are proud to be working with our family of Newham schools and with a wide range of community organisations to deliver a positive RSHE curriculum that will help to make Newham the best place for young people to grow up.”**

Cllr Rokshana Fiaz, Mayor of Newham

Cllr Sarah Ruiz, Cabinet Member, Education

Cllr Jane Lofthouse, Deputy Cabinet Member for Education

Cllr Canon Ann Easter, Commissioner for Interfaith & Inter-Religious Dialogue

Cllr Dr Rohit Kumar Dasgupta, Commissioner for Social Integration and Equalities

## WHY DO WE NEED RSHE?

Schools have a legal duty to teach RSHE from September 2020 and have done so in one form or another for many years. We know that young people who have had good school-based teaching of RSHE are more likely to:

- **Wait longer before having sex for the first time.**
- **Use contraception when they do have sex.**
- **Have the confidence to seek, and know where to go to get help and advice.**
- **Develop an understanding that will help them make intelligent and informed relationships choices.**

We also know that young people who talk about RSHE with parents are also likely to have better sexual health outcomes. So, parents working in partnership with schools can achieve the best outcomes for pupils.

Good knowledge and understanding can also lead to fewer unintended teenage pregnancies and fewer sexually transmitted infections. We know that RSHE raises awareness of the risks and dangers of child sexual exploitation, cyber-bullying and abuse in relationships. RSHE

provides children and young people with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and seek help. They are likely to understand respect and see the value of diversity and equality.

In Newham we have many poor health outcomes that are likely to improve when schools give good quality RSHE lessons:

- **More than 100 women suffering from female genital mutilation came forward for the first time in Newham between April 2018 and March 2019, according to NHS data.**
- **59% of under 18 pregnancies end in medical abortion.**
- **Newham has the second highest rate of domestic violence in London. 65% of all child protection orders in Newham have domestic violence as a risk factor for the children involved. Domestic violence is also seen as a risk factor likely to steer young people towards antisocial behaviour and involvement in gangs and violent crime.**
- **Nationally the average age at which a child first views pornography, according to the NSPCC, is 11.**

National evidence from the NSPCC (2018) shows:

- **Almost one in 10 children have experienced cyber-bullying in the UK.**
- **Children can be vulnerable to being abused by adults who contact them online.**
- **In 2018, almost a quarter of young people said they had been contacted online by an adult they did not know.**

## **WHO IS INVOLVED IN RSHE?**

The 'RSHE partnership' is supporting schools to get ready for the new law for September 2020. This partnership brings the Local Authority, Newham schools, and Newham's RSHE and Religious Education Advisors together. It is expected that the quality of RSHE in the borough will be stronger through this joined up approach.

Our guidance to schools is based upon our consultation with schools, councillors, unions, parents, pupils, governors and local community groups (including faith leaders and LGBT+ groups). We have liaised with our colleagues in neighbouring boroughs, as well as the DfE and Ofsted.

## **WHAT AGE GROUPS OF CHILDREN HAVE RSHE?**

Schools teach RSHE throughout a child's primary and secondary school life. The content will vary to ensure it is age appropriate.

## WHAT IS IN THE RSHE LESSONS?

Schools understand that they must teach pupils sensitively on:

- **Safeguarding.**
- **The national curriculum, including science.**
- **The statutory content of RSHE.**

Schools have been given guidance on where and how to include recommended content of RSHE in an age appropriate way. All that is taught will respect and reflect the diverse backgrounds our pupils come from.

## HOW DO SCHOOLS ENSURE THE INCLUSION OF ALL?

RSHE in school should be taught in a balanced way, in line with our legal context for relationships and equality in the UK. Schools have a duty to ensure they are inclusive for all pupils, families and backgrounds. In practice. This means that schools will explore the range of backgrounds as well as the differing families. This will include diverse:

- **Religions or belief systems and cultures.**
- **Families that are made up in many different ways: parents (same or opposite sex), extended families, single**

## DO PUPILS HAVE TO TAKE PART?

Parents can remove their children from relationships and sex education until September 2020. After this time they will still be able to remove them from sex education until their children are around 15.

**parent families, grandparents, carers, foster parents and blended families.**

Good RSHE teaching and an inclusive school environment should meet the needs of all pupils, regardless of their:

- **Age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity.**

This will reflect life in modern Britain and supports pupils to develop tolerance and respect difference.

# The truth about working together

The Local Authority, Schools and Newham Religious Education and RSHE Advisors are committed to working hard, in partnership with parents and community groups, to make sure RSHE in Newham is of the highest quality and sensitive to the needs of all our children and young people.

## Who should I speak to if I have further questions?

Please contact your school and ask to speak to the head teacher.

## References

Maddow et al, 2012, London.  
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National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 2018.  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1067/how-safe-are-our-children-2018.pdf>

Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology  
POSTNOTE 576, June 2018

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019

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**People at the Heart of Everything we do**