Sex education in the Life Lessons secondary curriculum

This document gives details of lessons which are, or might be considered to be classed as “sex education”, as per the 2025 RS HE guidance.

There is no formal definition of sex education, therefore, in the right -most column, we have given our opinion, as PSHE experts. However, schools need to make their own decision about what they do and do not consider to be sex education. We have given as much information as possible, which is also included in the “LIVE - Secondary Upgrade Curriculum Information” document.

Year group	Lesson Title	Strand	Core / Greater Depth	Sex Education Information	Does this lesson count as sex education?
Y7	What is sexual harassment and what can we do to stop it?	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment	Core	This lesson helps young people to identify harmful behaviours and acts of sexual harassment, alongside advice on how young people themselves can prevent it and help those who are vitim to it.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to discuss the content with parents. There are no details of sexual acts, although this lesson does refer to the abstract concept of "sexual desire".
Y8	How can people understand their sexual desires?	Puberty	Greater Depth	This lesson covers the development of sexual desire as a part of puberty. Looking briefly at the nature of sexual desire, masturbation and orgasms as a part of pleasure and understanding our bodies.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a lesson about puberty, not about sexual intercourse: This lesson does not give any details about sexual intercourse between two

					people, although it does define what sexual desires are and defines masturbation using the terms genitals and pleasure. It does not tell students 'how to masturbate', and does not go into details of the ways that people masturbate.
Y8	What happens during sexual intercourse	Sexual Health and Contraception	Greater Depth	This lesson covers the practical facts about sexual intercourse, including PIV sex and sex that can lead to pregnancy. It also looks at the concept of sex from an emotional perspective, and the purpose of sex as a means of pleasure.	This lesson should be classed as sex education. Therefore, parents have the right to withdraw their child from this lesson until three terms before their 16th birthday (Broadly, until year 11).
Y8	What choices do people make around using condoms?	Sexual Health and Contraception	Core	This lesson looks at the choices people can make around using condoms, the right type, how they work and how to properly use one.	This lesson should be classed as sex education. Therefore, parents have the right to withdraw their child from this lesson until three terms before their 16th birthday (Broadly, until year 11).
Y8	What can be the impact of viewing pornography?	The effect of pornography and online cultures on sexual behaviour	Greater Depth	This lesson covers the impact of pornography on real sexual intimacy. Considering the impact on expectations, and its potential for causing a disconnect between partners, as well as leading to addiction, harmful attitudes and ability to make healthy choice s around sex and intimacy.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a lesson about online safety, safeguarding and healthy choices, not about sexual intercourse:

					This lesson does not give any details about sexual intercourse between two people, although it does define what sexual desires are and defines masturbation using the terms genitals and pleasure. It does not tell students 'how to masturbate', and does not g o into details of the ways that people masturbate.
Y8	How can we create a school free from sexual harassment?	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment	Core	This lesson looks at the impact that sexual harassment can have on a school community and how it can manifest. It explains the consequences of sexual harassment and the importance of being an active bystander if a young person is ever to witness it.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to discuss the content with parents. There are no details of sexual acts, although this lesson does refer to the concept of "sexual harassment."
Y9	How can people protect themselves and others from STIs?	Sexual Health and Contraception	Core	This lesson covers vaginal, anal and oral sex (limited information - no diagrams of sexual intercourse) , genitals, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, male - male, male -female and female - female sexual activity.	This lesson should be classed as sex education. Therefore, parents have the right to withdraw their child from this lesson until three terms before their 16th birthday (Broadly, until year 11).
Y9	How do people decide if they are ready for romance and intimacy?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Core	The lesson examines the nature of romantic relationships, and what is meant by sexual intimacy. It includes examples of forms of sexual intimacy and why people choose to engage in them. It also	Life Lessons does not consider this to be sex education, because there are no details of sexual acts. Some might consider this to be sex education, because it mentions communication and choices around sexual intercourse.

				covers the law, and how to engage in sexual intimacy safely.	
Y9	Why is sexual consent so important?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Core	This lesson looks at the fundamental nature of consent when it comes to sexual intimacy. Considering the importance of consent, how it is given, and the results of not seeking explicit consent.	Life Lessons does not consider this to be sex education, because there are no details of sexual acts. Some might consider this to be sex education, because it mentions communication and choices around sexual intercourse.
Y9	How do online cultures affect our connection to each other?	The effect of pornography and online cultures on sexual behaviour	Greater Depth	This lesson looks at the harms of pornography in relation to our connection with others. Exploring how viewing pornography can lead to unhealthy attitudes and behaviours	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a lesson about online safety, safeguarding and healthy choices, not about sexual intercourse: This lesson does not give any details about sexual intercourse between two people, although it does use the term "arousal" when describing how people may respond to pornography.
Y9	How can bystanders reduce sexual harassment?	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment	Core	This lesson is focused on bystanders to sexual harassment, looking at the difference between an active and passive bystander. It provides young people with practical advice on how to be an	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to discuss the content with parents. There are no details of sexual acts,

				active bystander and reduce the harm caused by sexual harassment and the the positive impact that being an active bystander can have.	although this lesson does refer to the concept of "sexual harassment.
Y9	What are the warning signs of unhealthy sexual behaviour?	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment	Core	This lesson focuses on what constitutes unhealthy sexual behaviour, including certain acts that young people may not be aware can be counted as such. It then counteracts this by looking at healthy sexual behaviour.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a lesson about how to identify and respond to the signs of harmful sexual behaviour. This lesson does not give any details about sexual intercourse between two people, although it does refer to unhealthy sexual behaviour, consent, sexuality and people making sexual comments.
Y10	How can people make healthy choices around contraception?	Sexual health & contraception	Core	This lesson looks at a wide range of contraceptive options and their purpose, explaining the options available so that young people can make informed choices.	This lesson should be classed as sex education. Therefore, parents have the right to withdraw their child from this lesson until three terms before their 16th birthday (Broadly, until year 11).
Y10	How can people communicate honestly in a romantic relationship?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Greater Depth	This lesson looks at a range of topics within romantic relationships, including attraction and being positive romantic partners.	Life Lessons does not consider this to be sex education, because there are no details of sexual acts.

Y10	How can someone understand sexual pleasure and attunement?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Greater Depth	This lesson looks at sexual intimacy and what can bring pleasure. It discusses the idea of curiosity, and understanding personal needs and wants, as well as understanding those of others. It also covers attunement, to the self and to others while engaged in sexual intimacy.	Life Lessons considers this to be sex education, because it talks about masturbation, sexual pleasure, sexual touch and attunement during sexual situations. Some would consider this not to be sex education, because there is no detail about sexual acts.
Y10	How can someone communicate choices about sex and intimacy?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Core	This lesson focuses on the need for clear, open and honest communication during sexual intimacy. Including communication around wants and needs effectively, and the barriers to doing so.	Life Lessons does not consider this to be sex education, because there are no details of sexual acts. Some might consider it sex education, because it talks about the kind of things people may communicate about during sex, such as speed, force and timings.
Y10	How can romantic relationships be impacted by culture and technology?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Greater Depth	This lesson examines the impact that online spaces, cultures, and popular media can impact a person's perception of sexual relationships. Including the pressure or desire to share intimate images, the impact of sexualised deep fakes, and AI chat bots.	Life Lessons does not consider this to be sex education, because there are no details of sexual acts.
Y10	How can we respond to sexual behaviour online?	The effect of pornography and online cultures on sexual behaviour	Greater Depth	This lesson looks at harmful sexual behaviour online and illegal activity online. It also covers the harms of encountering such behaviour, the use of AI, and the impact on the victims.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a

					lesson about online safety, safeguarding and healthy choices, not about sexual intercourse.
Y10	How do gender stereotypes influence sexual violence?	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment	Core	This lesson looks at how gender stereotypes can create harmful expectations around sex and behaviour. Examining how this can manifest and the importance of not making assumptions about others.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a lesson about how to identify and respond to gender stereotypes and non - specific sexual violence. This lesson does not give any details about sexual intercourse, sexual acts or sexual violence. It does refer to sexual expectations, and the concept of sexual violence.
Y10	What are the effects of sexual harassment on men and women?	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment	Greater Depth	This lesson looks at how unhealthy sexual behaviour reduces the possibility of trust, safety and genuine connection. It looks at how acts of sexual harassment can impact the way that men in wider society are perceived, and the importance of men and boys be ing active in stopping sexual harassment.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a lesson about the effects of sexual harassment. This lesson does not give any details about sexual intercourse, sexual acts or sexual violence. It does refer to unwanted touch and unwanted sexual comments.

Y11	How can we test for, and protect each other from, STIs?	Sexual health & contraception	Greater Depth	This lesson looks at the prevention of STIs, and the process of being tested for such. It emphasises the importance of honest communication when it comes to contraception and STIs to prevent their transmission to partners.	This lesson should be classed as sex education. Therefore, parents have the right to withdraw their child from this lesson until three terms before their 16th birthday (Broadly, until year 11).
Y11	How can we have a positive impact on romantic partners?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Core	This lesson briefly touches upon pressure in romantic relationships, and why might we sometimes be motivated to pressure someone into something sexual?	Life Lessons does not consider this to be sex education, because there are no details of sexual acts.
Y11	What can be the impact of combining alcohol and drugs with intimacy?	Romantic and intimate relationships	Core	This lesson explores the impact of substances on choices and behaviour when it comes to intimacy, as well as how to reduce harms.	Life Lessons does not consider this to be sex education, because there are no details of sexual acts.
Y11	How do online cultures and content affect sexual relationships? - Pornography	The effect of pornography and online cultures on sexual behaviour	Core	This lesson explores how online media can have a powerful effect on the way people behave in sexual relationships. It covers the harms and risks of viewing pornography, and what can lead to developing harmful attitudes and behaviours.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. Life Lessons considers this to be a lesson about the impact of pornography on relationships, not about sexual intercourse: This lesson does not give any details

					about sexual intercourse between two people, although it does use the broad phrase of "unhealthy sexual behaviour" and describes the dangers and illegality of strangulation.
Y11	What support do the survivors of sexual violence need?	Identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment	Greater Depth	This lesson examines why people who have experienced sexual harm need support from professionals and those close to them. It looks at the effects and impact of sexual harassment, and the importance of supporting those who are victims of it.	Life Lessons do not consider this lesson to be part of sex education, but schools may wish to make their own decision and discuss the content with parents. This lesson does not give any details about sexual intercourse, sexual acts or sexual violence. It does refer to sexual expectations, and the non -specific concept of sexual violence.