

What is the statutory RSHE guidance?

The statutory RSHE guidance is a government document that explains what all schools in England must teach about relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). The statutory RSHE guidance is a government document that explains what all schools in England must teach about relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). It replaces the previous guidance published in 2019. The guidance was written and published by the Department for Education (DfE). It was informed by a national consultation, expert input, and feedback from young people. The new guidance becomes compulsory from 1st September 2026, schools can start using it earlier if they wish, but legally they must be following it by that date. Until then, the 2019 guidance remains in force.

Does the Pol-Ed curriculum meet the statutory RSHE guidance?

Yes! The new Pol-Ed curriculum meets all the statutory relationships and health education to be taught in primary schools and all the statutory relationships, sex and health education to be taught in secondary.

How have Pol-Ed gone about this?

Once the new statutory guidance was released, our subject matter experts went through each section, line by line. A mapping exercise then took place where existing content was mapped against the new statutory guidance and gaps in the content were noted. New lessons were then created, and existing lessons were amended to ensure all statutory content is now covered.

How do we know what is covered and when?

Pol-Ed have produced curriculum documents which outline all the statutory content for that phase (primary or secondary), and the corresponding lessons that meet each piece of content. These documents are in a simple and easy to read table format and the statutory content is presented identically to how it is organised and worded within the Department for Education's statutory guidance.

How does Pol-Ed align with the statutory guiding principles for relationships, sex and health education?

Pol-Ed whole heartedly agrees with and follows the guiding principles as outlined in the statutory guidance. We engage with pupils by visiting schools and seeking pupil voice, as well as by carrying out student voice questionnaires. Pol-Ed also utilises any external documents that capture the national picture of children and young people's perceptions and experiences. Engagement with parents and carers is crucial and this is why we have a parent page on our website outlining who we are and what we do. We have also started developing information for parents and carers to support them with having important safeguarding conversations at home and this is an area we will continue to develop. Pol-Ed ensures a positive curriculum by promoting healthy norms about relationships and wider behaviour of children and young people, and great care is taken to ensure our case studies and scenarios are inclusive and free from harmful biases.

Our curriculum is spiral in design to ensure that our topics are sequenced in a way that allows for knowledge and skills to be developed in an age appropriate way over time, for example, consent is first explored in EYFS and year 1 through the lens of 'safe hands' and 'how to play nicely', before consent within friendships and then consent within romantic relationships is explored across older year groups.

We are proud to be relevant and responsive to the national picture of issues impacting children and young people, and are able to utilise our policing relationships to ensure we are ahead of the curve when it comes to emerging and shifting topics, such as how illegal drugs are being consumed and distributed, the changing landscape of exploitation and the emergence of new AI enabled crime.

We support teachers and wider professionals to be skilled deliverers of participatory education by offering a comprehensive CPD programme exploring key information, pedagogical ideas, and signposting in relation to key PSHE topics. Lastly, we encourage a whole school approach by ensuring our curriculum can be utilised by all, and through out passport lessons and certification which can be used as part of a whole school rewards strategy.

What is Pol-Eds approach to the optional primary sex education elements of the guidance?

Sex education is not statutory in primary schools, and the guidance recommends that sex education content covered in schools aligns with the national curriculum for science. However, schools may choose to deliver wider aspects of the sex education content, but if done so this must be age appropriate and parental/carers consent must be sought. Similarly, whether to teach about sharing explicit images is optional in primary schools and will depend on the individual schools' need. Whilst our planned curriculum has been designed to only explicitly cover the statutory content outlined, when schools register to Pol-Ed they have full access to all resources, therefore, if primary schools wish to utilise some of the KS3 resources they are able to do so this is at the individual schools' discretion and should be clearly communicated to parents/carers as per your school's RSHE policy.

What if the statutory guidance is updated or amended?

Pol-Ed is committed to ensuring it remains up to date with any changes within statutory expectations placed on schools. We aim to work in collaboration with teachers and wider professionals to support them in implementing statutory RSHE and we want them to be confident that by using the Pol-Ed curriculum they are meeting legal expectations in relation to PSHE. If the landscape changes, then so will we!

Want to find out more?

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