



# Pendle Community High School & College

Rated **Outstanding** in all areas Ofsted 2017

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27.11.19

Dear Parents and Carers,

Last week, we held two Parent Forums – which focussed upon consultation in relation to the new statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) aspect of PSHE. PCHS&C are have adopted the new framework early and will be implementing the guidelines this current academic year.

We would now like to share with all parents/carers, two specific Department for Education documents (enclosed) which we hope will give you all the information you might need in relation to the curriculum PCHS&C needs to deliver:

1. Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education at your child’s secondary school:  
A guide for parents (including your rights as a parent)
2. Frequently asked questions.

As we have stated in previous correspondence, PCHS&C only educates with factual information, in the same way we teach about different religions. We proactively teach respect for ourselves and other people but certainly do not promote any particular views or lifestyles.

We would also like to invite parents/carers to specifically read our RSE policy – available on our website: [www.pchs.lancs.sch.uk](http://www.pchs.lancs.sch.uk) and feedback any questions, issues or comments you may have using the feedback form on the website or using the reply slip below. If you would like to meet with one of our named Governors to discuss this issue further, please also indicate this, and we will ask them to contact you.

We look forward to hearing any feedback you may wish to offer, so we can consider this prior to finalising our RSE policy by mid-December.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lingard                      and                      Mrs Huggett

**Feedback on RSE policy - Please return by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/carer of: \_\_\_\_\_ (student’s name)

I would like to make the following comments re PCHSC RSE policy: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like Jamshaid Yousaf or Trevor Ashton (Governors) to contact me to discuss this further:

Yes                       No



# Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education at your child's secondary school: a guide for parents

We want all children to grow up healthy, happy, safe, and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain. That is why, from September 2020, all secondary age children will be taught Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

These subjects are designed to equip your child with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life. The world for all young people looks very different from the way it did 20 years ago when this curriculum was last updated – these changes bring the content into the 21st century, so that it is relevant for your child.

Your child's school will have flexibility to deliver the content in a way that is age and developmentally appropriate and sensitive to the needs and religious background of its pupils.

## Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships and Sex Education will build on the teaching at primary. It aims to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds.

Your child's school will cover content on what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like and what makes a good friend, colleague and successful marriage or committed relationship. At the appropriate time, the focus will move to developing intimate relationships, to equip your child with knowledge they need to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.

By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- families
- respectful relationships, including friendships
- online media
- being safe
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

You can find further details by searching '**relationships, sex and health education**' on GOV.UK.

## Health Education

Health Education aims to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- mental wellbeing
- internet safety and harms
- physical health and fitness
- healthy eating
- drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- health and prevention
- basic first aid
- changing adolescent body

You can find further details by searching '**relationships, sex and health education**' on GOV.UK.



## Your rights as a parent

The important lessons you teach your child about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe, are respected and valued under this new curriculum. Teaching at school will complement and reinforce the lessons you teach your child as they grow up.

Your child's school is required to consult with you when developing and renewing their policies on Relationships, Sex and Health Education. These policies must be published online and be available to anybody free of charge.

You can express your opinion, and this will help your child's school decide how and when to cover the content of the statutory guidance. It may also help them decide whether to teach additional non-statutory content. Schools are required to ensure their teaching reflects the age and religious background of their pupils.

Some schools will start to teach these subjects from September 2019 – if you'd like to know more, please speak to your child's school about what they plan to teach.



## Right to withdraw your child

You cannot withdraw your child from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships and Sex Education, because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

If you do not want your child to take part in some or all of the Sex Education lessons delivered at secondary, you can ask that they are withdrawn. Your child's head teacher will consider this request and discuss it with you, and will grant this in all but exceptional circumstances, up until three school terms before your child turns 16. At this age, your child can choose to receive Sex Education if they would like to, and the school should arrange for your child to receive this teaching in one of those three terms (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

If your child's school is planning to teach these subjects from September 2019, your right to withdraw your child from Sex Education will be governed by the current legislation and so is absolute for the 2019/20 academic year – your child cannot opt in, and the head teacher will not overrule this request. This will remain the case until September 2020, when the new subjects will become compulsory and the new right to withdraw provisions will apply.

The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from.





The Department for Education is introducing compulsory [Relationships Education for primary pupils and Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\)](#) for secondary pupils from September 2020. Also, from September 2020 it will be compulsory for all schools to teach Health Education.

Through these subjects, we want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe – we want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive contribution to society. Throughout our engagement process as we developed this curriculum, we have heard a number of wide ranging concerns.

Below, we have explained some of the common misconceptions around the subjects.

**Q: Will my child's school have to consult with me before teaching these subjects?**

A: Schools will be required to consult with parents when developing and reviewing their policies for Relationships Education and RSE, which will inform schools' decisions on when and how certain content is covered. Effective consultation gives the space and time for parents to input, ask questions, share concerns and for the school to decide the way forward. Schools will listen to parent's views, and then make a reasonable decision as to how they wish to proceed. What is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the school and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content.

A school's policies for these subjects must be published online, and must be available to any individual free of charge. Schools should also ensure that, when they consult parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, for example the books they will use in lessons.

**Q: Does the new Relationships Education/ RSE curriculum take account of my faith?**

A: The subjects are designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain.

In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that topics are appropriately handled. In developing these subjects, we have worked with a number of representative bodies and faith organisations, representing all the major faith groups in England. Several faith organisations produce teaching materials that schools can choose to use.



**Q: Do I have a right to withdraw my child from Relationships and Sex Education?**

A: Parents will have a right to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education as we believe the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

**Q: Has the government listened to the views of my community in introducing these subjects?**

A: A thorough engagement process, involving a public call for evidence and discussions with over 90 organisations, as well as the public consultation on the draft regulations and guidance, has informed the key decisions on these subjects. The consultation received over 11,000 responses from teachers, schools, expert organisations, young people and parents – these responses have helped finalise the statutory guidance as well as the regulations that have been laid in Parliament.

**Q: Will these subjects promote LGBT relationships?**

A: No, these subjects don't 'promote' anything, they educate. Pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. These subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships. RSE should meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity – this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships in the context of the law.

Pupils should receive teaching on LGBT relationships during their school years - we expect secondary schools to include LGBT content. Primary schools are enabled and encouraged to cover LGBT content if they consider it age appropriate to do so, but there is no specific requirement for this. This would be delivered, for example, through teaching about different types of family, including those with same sex parents.

**Q: Will teachers receive training before delivering these subjects?**

A: The department is committed to supporting schools to deliver these subjects to a high standard. We know that training is a priority for teachers and we will be consulting with teachers, trade unions and other key stakeholders over the coming months on how we structure the training.

In addition, we are encouraging schools to act as early adopters for this curriculum and to start teaching the subjects from September 2019.