

Consultation with Parents: Updated Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Effective September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to inform you about important updates to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) that will become statutory from September 2026 following new Department for Education (DfE) guidance.

As part of these statutory changes, schools are required to review and update their RSHE policy and curriculum and consult with parents and carers. This letter marks the start of our consultation process.

Why RSHE is important

RSHE plays a vital role in helping children to:

- Build positive, respectful relationships
- Develop skills for friendships, managing emotions and resolving conflict
- Understand how to stay safe (including online safety)
- Develop knowledge to support their physical and mental health

The guidance emphasises that high-quality RSHE supports children to become kind, respectful and resilient individuals, and helps them recognise when something is wrong and how to seek help.

What is changing from September 2026

The updated statutory guidance strengthens expectations for schools. In primary schools, there continues to be a clear distinction between:

1. Relationships Education (statutory)

All pupils will be taught about:

- Families and the different ways they are formed
- Friendships and respectful behaviour
- Bullying and how to seek help
- Online relationships and safety
- Personal boundaries and privacy
- Keeping safe, including recognising abuse and knowing how to report concerns
- This reflects the requirement that primary RSHE builds the foundations of healthy relationships and safeguarding awareness from an early age.²

2. Health Education (statutory)

Pupils will learn about:

- Physical health and wellbeing
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Healthy lifestyles (including food, sleep and exercise)
- Growing and changing (including puberty in an age-appropriate way)

3. Sex Education (non-statutory in primary)

Primary schools may choose to teach some aspects of sex education (beyond the science curriculum) This will always be age-appropriate and carefully planned. Parents have the right to request withdrawal from this element.

Key principles of the updated guidance

The 2026 guidance introduces a stronger emphasis on:

- Age-appropriate, carefully sequenced learning
- Openness and transparency with parents—schools must share materials on request
- A whole-school approach linking RSHE with safeguarding, behaviour and wellbeing
- Teaching that helps children identify risks early and stay safe
- Ensuring all content is inclusive and accessible, including for pupils with SEND
- Parent rights and involvement

We want to work in partnership with you. The guidance is clear that schools must engage proactively with parents and take your views into account when shaping RSHE provision.

You have the right to:

- View our RSHE policy and curriculum content
- Request to see teaching materials used in lessons
- Request withdrawal from sex education (not relationships or health education)

(this can be found here Parent/carer Zone: <https://www.1decision.co.uk/resources/parent-carer-zone>)

Please note:

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education
Pupils will continue to learn about human development through the science curriculum.

Our approach

At Noremarsch Junior School, our RSHE curriculum will:

- Be age-appropriate and sensitively delivered
- Promote respect, kindness and inclusion
- Equip pupils with the knowledge to stay safe and make informed decisions
- Reflect our safeguarding responsibilities and duty of care
- Be taught by trained staff in a supportive environment

Consultation process

We are now inviting your feedback on our updated RSHE policy and curriculum.

You can take part by:

- Reviewing the draft policy here: [Insert link]
- Attending a parent information session: [Insert date/time]
- Completing a short feedback form: [Insert link]
- Consultation deadline: [Insert date]

Your views are extremely important and will be carefully considered before finalising our policy. If you would like to discuss any aspect of RSHE or have any questions, please contact the school office on esherwood@njs.ascendlearningtrust.org.uk or by calling 01793 852250

We recognise that RSHE is a sensitive but essential part of your child's education. Our aim is to work together with parents and carers to ensure all children receive the knowledge, skills and values they need to thrive and stay safe.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,
Hilary MacMeekin
Headteacher